PARTNERSHIPS FOR CREATIVITY
An evaluation of implementation

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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Executive summary

The Stage 2 evaluation

In 1997, the NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) was commissioned by CAPE UK (Creative Arts Partnerships in Education UK) to conduct a baseline evaluation (Ashworth *et al.*, 1998) prior to launching its initiative in Leeds and Greater Manchester. In 2000, NFER was invited to carry out a retrospective evaluation of the project's progress to date. The overall focus of this Stage 2 evaluation was on the processes of implementation and not on the impact of the initiative on participating pupils. Specifically, the evaluation was contracted to consider the nature of partnerships, their planning, the implementation of plans, those programmes developed for the European Social Fund (ESF) target group, the partnership evaluation strategies, to assess any continuity in partnership aims, and to examine any factors that may enable or inhibit the implementation of creative activities.

Partnerships

The evaluation investigated the range of approaches adopted in the formation of school-based partnerships. Three different types of partnerships were identified: the extensive; the developing; and the constrained. The *extensive* partnerships built on previous relationships, were relatively stable, displayed high degrees of commitment from their members and lent themselves to more widespread engagement in creative activities across the curriculum. The *developing* partnerships were located within particular clusters of subjects, or were closely identified with a specific core of individuals. They tended to expand and contract around this core, offering greater or lesser potential depending on a range of contextual factors. The *constrained* partnerships offered fewer possibilities for engagement in creative activities and for their implementation beyond an individual subject. Activities were limited to a series of discrete 'one-off' projects and were restricted to a small group of participants. There were few CAPE partnerships of this type and where they did exist, they reflected difficulties in coming to terms with the demands of the initiative. The conclusions from the evaluation would be that the *extensive* model of partnership would be more likely to generate an approach to creativity that transcends any arts or narrow curricular location and engages the greater number of participants.

Planning and implementation

The research found that participants valued the time set aside for partnership planning and it was considered to be an essential and very positive feature

of the initiative, differentiating CAPE from many other initiatives. Planning was more effective within those partnerships identified as extensive, less so in those identified as constrained. School-based coordinators were instrumental in planning and other teachers were more likely to be involved in planning at the level of activity. The evaluation identified four main approaches to planning at school-based partnership level: the coordinator-led and inclusive; the coordinator-led and exclusive; the creative professional-led and inclusive; and the non-directed and exclusive.

The *coordinator-led and inclusive* approach was the most common and the most effective in engaging the school Senior Management Team (SMT). There was evidence of a strong commitment to inclusivity in planning, where the coordinator played a leading role, but included others. The *coordinator-led and exclusive* approach to planning was less prevalent (evident in only four of the 21 partnerships) and tended to involve the school SMT less. It was an approach that was common where the initiative was identified with a particular individual or department, or where, in the absence of other partners, the coordinator felt compelled to take responsibility for planning. The *creative professional-led and inclusive* approach only occurred in the extensive partnerships; it was not evident in those typified as developing or constrained. It was possibly a 'reactive' approach, in that it was evident only in two sites where there were replacement coordinators. In this approach, the creative professional took on a great deal of the planning and occasionally acted as 'mentor' to a new coordinator. The *non-directed and exclusive* approach to planning was associated with constrained partnerships and therefore infrequent. No single partner took overall responsibility for planning. It was associated with partnerships where individuals had left, where there was a break in activity, or where there was no long-term planning strategy.

The research found that revisions to partnership plans were often made. The most common cause for such changes was that the original plan was too structured and lacked the flexibility required for implementation. Other reasons for revisions included: over-elaborate and over-ambitious plans; staff turnover or illness; the pressure of the timetable or school year; the influence of tests and examinations; the compatibility of individuals to activities; and the ineffective management of the planning process within the partnership or partner school(s).

The research described four conditions that were regularly associated with the successful implementation of plans:

- effective communication;
- the effective targeting of creative activities (matching the skills available to pupils' abilities, resources, time constraints, etc.);
- strong leadership and the active involvement of the school SMT;
- the extension of activities beyond a narrow curriculum base or a location identified with the arts.

Where there was less symmetry between plans and their implementation, it was often linked to a lack of flexibility, over-ambitious plans and to staffing or school-based factors. However, where there was greater symmetry, positive developments linked to improvements in teaching and learning were reported.

The European Social Fund target group

The research found that CAPE activities had a significant positive impact on the learning experience of some disadvantaged young people. The evidence suggests that CAPE activities were perceived to have impacted on pupils' experience in four key areas:

- increasing pupils' engagement and overcoming disaffection;
- increasing retention in educational settings and reducing drop-out;
- rejoining pupils with their educational careers following fractures due to illness or absenteeism;
- offering new opportunities to pupils and so influencing their aspirations.

The research found that existing patterns of learning were changed with regard to the ESF target group and that CAPE activities were reported as instrumental in changing attitudes towards marginalised young people. This change was described more commonly, and was perceived to be more substantial, in extensive partnerships, or those where ESF activities had been sustained. Constrained partnerships, or those where ESF activities had not been as sustained, reported less impact.

Reflection and evaluation

The research found that the majority of partnerships had initiated some method of internal review or evaluation, and that both formal and informal methods were in use across the initiative, often within the same partnership. In many partnerships, evaluation relied on unstructured methods, and some partnerships were developing 'creative' forms of evaluation. In extended partnerships, or where the SMT was more actively involved, there was evidence of more rigorous systems of evaluation. The inclusion of, or reference to, the CAPE initiative in the School Development Plan assisted both evaluation and review, although the responsibility for evaluation rested largely on the school-based coordinator. Finally, the research found that support for reflection and evaluation was available to participants from CAPE UK, LEAs and through links to the broader research community. Effective strategies to share good practice were evident, and many of these were located in the extensive partnerships. The ways in which these successes may be shared may be an important consideration, particularly for constrained partnerships, where the absence of SMT support may limit the ability of participants to share their work with others.

Partnership aims

The research found that the aims of CAPE UK were perceived differently by those participating in the research and that this difference was based on four factors:

- an individual's role within the initiative;
- an individual's proximity to the implementation of creative activities;
- the duration of an individual's involvement in the initiative;
- partnership type.

The degree to which the aims of CAPE were seen as stable was found to be linked to successful implementation and the factors identified above. That is, where there was perception of stability, it was associated with successful implementation, with extensive partnerships, the duration of an individual's engagement, their proximity or distance from activities and their overall role.

There was evidence of a shift in partnership priorities from the provision of creative experiences and the production of creative products, to creative teaching and learning methods. The production of creative products, in itself, became a vehicle for learning.

Enabling and inhibiting factors

The research sought to identify the core features of successful and less successful implementation. Partnership type was found to be less important in shaping participants' perceptions, and across the initiative, five areas were identified as important aspects in successful implementation: good communication within the partnership; the constitution of the partnership and its relationship to others within the CAPE UK initiative; the curricular location of the activities mounted; the links between activities and teaching and learning; and the administration of the initiative at the partnership level.

The research also found a number of areas that may require consideration: the need for greater support and guidance concerning funding for creative educational activities; the need to reduce the amount of paperwork associated with the initiative; the need to extend the initiative outwards from its 'arts base' within some partnerships; the need to raise the status of the initiative (locally and nationally); the need to ensure better communication between the different partnerships and between the partnerships and CAPE UK; the need to make more effective links between partnerships and with other initiatives; the need to improve planning; and the need to share the evident good practice.

Overall, nine factors were identified that *inhibited* implementation. However, of these, only three could be associated with less successful

implementation and these were largely linked to the constrained partnership type: school-specific factors, such as a timetable inflexibility, examinations, relocation; a lack of support for the initiative at the level of school SMT; and an inability to deal with the paperwork associated with the initiative (overload).

The research was able to identify the key factors that *enabled* implementation. Of these 11 key factors, three are implicated with successful implementation:

- **the support and enthusiasm of staff;**
- **the support of the school SMT;**
- **the support and efforts of the school-based coordinator.**

The research also found that a range of enabling and inhibiting factors could be evident within a single partnership and that any inhibiting factors *could* be and were overcome. However, this required the presence of the three core enabling factors above: the core features of successful implementation of creative activities within creative (school-based) partnerships.

1. CREATIVITY, CAPE UK AND THE STAGE 2 EVALUATION

1.1 Creativity and educational experience

Creative Arts Partnerships in Education (United Kingdom) (CAPE UK) borrowed its name and much of its early inspiration from the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education initiative. However, although CAPE UK and the Chicago original share a number of similarities, there are some significant differences. A key one of these was the addition of 'creative' to CAPE UK's name, which signalled a central aspiration to enhance the place of creativity right across the curriculum – though, as noted in the Baseline Evaluation of CAPE UK (Ashworth *et al.*, 1998), leaving the term the 'arts' in the title seemed to be at odds with the whole curriculum focus intended by the UK initiative. In the light of such tensions, it is interesting to note that in recent printed material from CAPE UK the word 'arts' has been dropped from the title and the initiative is now described as 'Creative Partnerships in Education'.[1]

When CAPE UK was launched in 1997, discussions about the role of creativity in pupils' learning were comparatively rare and somewhat esoteric. To some degree at least, this changed with the publication of the Report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (GB. DFEE and DCMS, 1999), which increased national attention to the relationship between creativity and education – though it remains to be seen whether this will influence policy developments significantly. Creativity, the Report's authors argued, is an essential and often overlooked feature of contemporary schooling. Encouraging greater creativity in teaching and across the school curriculum will, they suggest, furnish young people with the skills they require to shape their own future.

Within the educational research community, there is an emerging view that all children have creative abilities and that creativity is something that may be taught (see Amabile, 1990; Craft *et al.*, 1997; Fryer, 1996; MacKinnon, 1972; Shallcross, 1981; and Torrance and Myers, 1970). However, there is no single definition as to what creativity is, and there are ongoing disagreements concerning how it may be identified or assessed. Creativity is a concept that eludes definition, but it is often identified in the interaction between the individual, materials and the environment in new or innovative ways. Rogers (1972) suggests that creativity is evident in a creative process,

[1] *Since the initiative was invariably referred to as 'CAPE' or 'CAPE UK' throughout the period covered by the present evaluation, we have used this term in the report.*

one through which there is: '... *the emergence in action of a novel relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other*' (Rogers, 1972, p. 139). This definition incorporates the key components and the processes of creativity, but some may argue that creativity can be present without an outcome.

The different views about what is creativity may be grouped under three broad headings: the sectoral; the elite; and the democratic (Ashworth, *et al.*, 1998; GB. DfEE and DCMS, 1999, pp. 27–9).

- Sectoral theories tend to identify creativity with role and with specific occupational sectors. There is often a general assumption that all of those working within a particular field are creative, such as all architects, all advertising executives or all musicians. It is assumed that an individual is creative simply because they are an architect, an advertising executive or a musician. Sectoral theories generally locate creativity within the arts, often as a prerequisite of occupying or fulfilling a role.

- The elite view cuts across occupational or sectoral definitions, but identifies creativity with individual endeavour or genius. An individual or their work may be considered to be highly creative and historically, artistically or socially significant.

- Democratic or inclusive theories of creativity tend to be linked to recent challenges to our views of intelligence (see Gardner, 1993; Goleman, 1996). The basic feature of the democratic theory is an assumption (or assertion) that creativity is evident, to greater or lesser degrees, in all people.

It is as propositions, or possibilities, that the democratic model of creativity is becoming attractive to those working with children and young people, and it is this inclusive model of creativity that informs the aims of CAPE UK. This definition suggests specific strategies of action for those associated with the initiative. For example, a sectoral definition would identify creativity with the creative arts faculties within schools. Creativity would be curricula specific; it would be evident within a number of individuals within certain faculties, to a greater or lesser degree, but those outside them (such as in the maths department) would be perceived as less creative or even non-creative. An elite definition would cut across the curriculum and across departments, but would associate creativity with genius, and so be somewhat restrictive in terms of those included. In contrast, according to CAPE principles, all pupils are identified as possessing (latent) creative abilities and it is in the fulcrum of the creative partnership between the pupil, the teacher, the creative professional and a range of external partners that these abilities may be exposed and enhanced.

1.2 Creative Arts Partnerships in Education

CAPE UK is a charitable trust working across the cities of Leeds and Manchester. CAPE UK partnerships are based in secondary schools, but aim to include: '... *creative professionals (artists, musicians, radio producers, architects, etc.), local businesses, local primary schools and local community organisations*' (CAPE UK, 2000).

At the time of the evaluation, there were 22 CAPE UK partnerships, 14 in Leeds and eight in Manchester. All are school based, and each has a coordinator and is supported by one or more creative professionals. Partnerships may include a range of other groups. At the initiative level, a degree of coordination is achieved through a combination of school-based and regional groups or committees.

1.3 The Stage 2 evaluation

In January 2000, the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) was commissioned by CAPE UK to carry out an evaluation of the ways in which the partnerships have implemented their plans for activities. The overall focus of the evaluation was on implementation and not on learning outcomes or other effects on those pupils who had taken part in the initiative. Within this, the evaluation had eight specific objectives, each of which is addressed within this report:

(i) to investigate the current state of CAPE UK partnership approaches as they have developed to date;

(ii) to describe and evaluate the nature of planning as undertaken within the overall programme;

(iii) to ascertain the extent and effectiveness of implementation of plans;

(iv) to assess the degree to which creativity has been built into the planning, and has been increased or advanced in the implementation of the plans, in relation to both the development of creative teaching methods and the development of creativity in the learner;

(v) to assess the extent to which CAPE principles have influenced programmes of learning with the European Social Fund (ESF) target group, namely those who are disadvantaged within the current system;

(vi) to assess the extent to which schools and other providers are reflecting on and evaluating the CAPE initiative and its impact on learners;

(vii) to examine the degree of continuity between the initial aims, the aims as currently perceived and the aims that are evident in the implementation of the initiative;

(viii) to identify the factors that have enabled or inhibited implementation at this stage.

The current evaluation builds on the Stage 1 evaluation conducted for CAPE UK by NFER (Ashworth *et al.*, 1998).

1.4 Research methods

1.4.1 Overview of methods used

Four main forms of data collection were used during the evaluation: interview; statistical pro forma; documentary analysis; and classroom observation. In total, 22 school-based partnerships were invited to take part in the research, eight in Greater Manchester and 14 in Leeds. In addition, two forms of provision based within, or aligned to, providers of further education (FE) were invited to take part, and although these are not 'true' partnerships with CAPE (for a number of reasons), this meant that a total of 24 partnerships *could* have taken part. However, not all of the school-based partnerships were able to take part in the fieldwork between February and July 2000, and one partnership in Leeds withdrew from the evaluation. Therefore, research took place at 23 sites, 22 of these being CAPE school-based partnerships and two being post-compulsory sites of provisions.

The evaluation consisted of two distinct but related strands. Strand 1 was an evaluation of implementation at all 23 sites, and included interviews with key personnel, the collection of related documentary evidence and the use of a statistical pro forma to collect baseline and background data. From these 23 partnerships, six were selected by random purposive sampling to form case studies of implementation during Strand 2. The sample was purposive in that it had three purposes: to provide a random sample of all partnerships; to ensure within that sample an equal number of partnerships from each region (in equal proportion to the total number of partnerships in that region); and to ensure within the sample the presence of partnerships from more than one LEA in the Greater Manchester region.

Strand 2 of the evaluation was designed to extend the scope of the methods used during Strand 1, by interviewing pupils, for example, and by using additional methods, such as the observation of creative activities. In addition to the six school-based case studies, both sites of provision outside compulsory education were invited to form case studies. This was intended to provide comparative evidence of implementation at 16-plus, but the different contexts and small size of this sub-sample limited comparison.

The partnerships sampled were located within five LEAs: Leeds, Manchester, Tameside, Trafford and Salford. Also included in the research were personnel based at CAPE UK itself, LEA personnel associated with CAPE UK and with creative arts provision and creative professionals based at a range of educational, arts and community organisations in Manchester and Leeds.

1.4.2 The interviews

During Strand 1, all partnerships were visited for one half day in order to carry out interviews with three individuals closely associated with the initiative:

- the school-based CAPE coordinator;
- the headteacher, or a member of the school management team (SMT) with responsibility for the initiative;
- a creative professional involved in the partnership.

An interview schedule was designed for each participant in relation to their roles and the aims of the research. Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were recorded. During Strand 2, additional interviews were conducted with pupils, school governors, classroom teachers, careers advisers and other personnel associated with CAPE UK and with creative arts provision. Table 1.1 summarises the total number of interviews in Strands 1 and 2 with each group of participants.

Table 1.1 Interviews in the Stage 2 evaluation

Interviewees	Strand 1 *N*	Strand 2 *N*
Coordinators	23	–
Creative professionals	15	–
Heads or members of SMT	18	–
Pupils	–	33
Teachers, creative professional or 'others'	–	22
Total	56	55

Source: NFER Stage 2 evaluation of CAPE UK

As Table 1.1 shows, not all of the potential participants were able to contribute to the research and some participants were slightly over-represented. For example, some creative professionals and SMT representatives were unable to take part due to other commitments, whereas the number of coordinators (23) exceeded the number of school-based partnerships (21) because some partnerships had more than one coordinator. However, the absence of some personnel at some sites is in part overcome by the contribution of the Strand 2 interviewees: 55 in total.

1.4.3 Statistical pro forma and related data

A statistical pro forma was sent to each school-based partnership in order to build on baseline data collected as part of the Stage 1 evaluation. As was the case with the earlier evaluation, not all of the partnerships returned the pro forma. In all, 14 of the 22 school-based partnerships sent back forms, although some of these were returned incomplete.

1.4.4 Documentary evidence

A range of documentation was collected during the evaluation. Documents included: original plans to form a partnership (i.e. proposals for activities submitted to CAPE UK during 1999); School Development Plans (SDPs); inspection reports; internal school documents such as newsletters; press cuttings; and documents related to the implementation of creative activities. In addition to these documents, video and audio data were also collected at a number of case-study sites. These primarily relate to performance, production and/or accreditation.

1.4.5 Observation

Observations of the implementation of creative activities were carried out at a number of sites. These included the observation of activities at case-study sites, but also extended out into the community, to performances at a range of venues and to the presentation of the products of creative activities to the general public.

1.5 Difficulties encountered during the evaluation

Overall, the evaluation was well supported by the positive contributions of the participants. Their cooperation extended beyond the provision of the requested data and eased the process of addressing our research aims. However, a number of problems were encountered during the evaluation, and, while these should not detract from the overall context of cooperation, they are pertinent to this report.

1.5.1 Participation

The majority of partnerships participated willingly and positively in the research and although they made considerable efforts to accommodate the needs of the evaluation, and whilst the evaluation team endeavoured to reduce the impact of the data collection on any one individual or site, our demands posed some difficulties at some sites. These related largely to issues of inspection, staff illness, or other pressures. One of the schools, for example, was involved in an OFSTED inspection and three had numerous post-OFSTED internal issues to contend with. Such school-level pressure meant that one school was unable to participate in the study. There was some degree of reluctance within partnerships where creative activities or

the cycle of creative activities was perceived to have come to an end, or to be coming to an end. This may in part be linked to transitions in project funding and will be discussed later within the report. None the less, it was apparent that only a minority of partnerships felt that the evaluation was unnecessary or distracting.

1.5.2 The timing of the research

The timing of the research was somewhat inconvenient for many participants, because most of the fieldwork fell in the final term of the school year. That their contributions were forthcoming at such a time suggests that the status of the initiative was high within some partnerships. Some of those involved in creative activities, particularly pupils in Year 11 had left the school, or were revising for, or taking, public examinations. As a consequence, opportunities to observe the implementation of creative activities were not possible at some case-study sites. It may also be the case that the timing of the evaluation affected the saliency of issues in participants' perceptions (e.g. the completion of ESF monitoring returns during the period of data collection may have heightened some interviewees' evident sense of the extent to which the exigencies of the ESF funding permeated most aspects of the initiative).

At one of the two FE partnership sites, the timing of the research was unfortunate in that it prevented us from conducting as detailed an examination of implementation as we would have preferred. At the other site, however, participation extended beyond the minimal requirements of the evaluation and the data collected provided a great deal of evidence concerning the impact of creative activities on this particular group.

1.6 The structure of the report

The report is organised into eight chapters. While the present chapter (Chapter 1) introduces the Stage 2 evaluation, Chapters 2–8 each address the specific objectives and research questions set for the evaluation. The first of these substantive chapters considers the nature of partnerships in the initiative.

2. PARTNERSHIPS: FROM ASPIRATION TO IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 Introduction

When the CAPE initiative was first suggested, it drew on the Chicago model of partnership: one developed in a different context. However, while informed by developments in Chicago, there was an expectation that CAPE UK partnerships would be less formal and more experimental. Flexibility in the interpretation of 'partnership' was encouraged, so that individuals would feel confident working together. This chapter sets out the current state of CAPE partnerships. It focuses primarily on the concept of partnership and presents a typology that allowed us to address one of the objectives of the evaluation:

(i) to investigate the current state of CAPE UK partnerships approaches as they have developed to date.

This typology of partnerships is based on a partnership's priorities, philosophy, focus and *modus operandi*. From this typification, we will go on to examine the successful and less successful implementation of creative activities.

2.2 Different approaches to partnership

2.2.1 Visions of partnership

Documentary evidence points to occasional and subtle shifts in CAPE UK's vision of partnership. CAPE UK may be traced back to 1995, when a briefing paper was commissioned to establish a major project involving schools, arts organisations and creative businesses. This was a visioning paper, developed to examine the feasibility of exploring a series of quite specific aims. It sought to establish local partnerships centred on a secondary school that would include: '*... a number of associated schools; at least one arts or other creative business; and representatives of student councils, local community groups, parents associations, tenants groups etc. as appropriate*' (Downing, 1995). The original CAPE partnership was thus located and rooted at the local level. Partnerships were to be managed locally.

This early vision of creative partnership underwent a series of revisions prior to the implementation of creative activities. Later documents show that partnerships were given more clearly defined roles, their activities linked

more explicitly to the curriculum, to school development, to planning and to research (CAPE UK, 1997). Membership would consist of a 'lead' school, a part-time designated coordinator, a number of feeder schools, at least one external business partner (either an arts organisation or a business with a clear creative element to it) and one or more community organisations. The 'ideal' type of partnership would consist of certain members, operating in certain (albeit innovative and experimental) ways, would convey a particular philosophy of creativity and retain a creative focus in their activities.

In practice, the concept of partnership proved more difficult to pin down. When asked if their activities took place within a partnership, many responded with an ambiguous 'yes', often seeking to clarify their response in order to convey the complexity of a partnership as it is experienced:

Interviewer: *Do your activities take place within a partnership?*

Interviewee: *Yes. I mean that can vary. Sometimes it's with a lead artist; sometimes it's with various artists. Sometimes it's with the Youth Service* (coordinator).

There was evidence that some partnerships came together around activities or 'projects', disbanding and reforming around two or three key individuals. Thus, as in several cases, partnership is taken to refer to a series of *ad hoc* relationships rather than a sustained relationship. Therefore, it is necessary to examine what a CAPE partnership consists of at each site, to identify its participants and to examine the nature of their relationship.

2.2.2 Partnership location

During the Stage 1 evaluation of CAPE UK (Ashworth *et al.*, 1998), partnership applications were found to be as much an expression of interest as a statement of intent. However, these documents contain the basis of the partnership as it was envisaged, and during the Stage 2 evaluation, provided useful data against which to map change.

Of the 21 CAPE partnerships that took part in the evaluation, all were based at a secondary school. All had primary partners, but five had no business partner. Creative professionals were evident within all partnerships (but with differing degrees of involvement) and all the partnerships had a coordinator. Interview data showed that the majority of partnerships built on previous positive relationships, and individuals or groups were invited into the partnership specifically because of its creative focus. One creative professional described his partnership as a 'marriage of convenience':

> *Nobody actually sat down and selected these people because they would be the best members of the partnership. They were there already and they were just encouraged to formalise that as a sort of centre point in the existing network* (creative professional).

The model set out by CAPE thereby brought about new professional relationships *and* also took account of existing practices and networks. In all cases, partnerships were interpreted as secondary school centred, and

no partnerships were centred at primary schools, and no partnerships were located wholly outside an educational setting. Therefore, and simply on the basis of partnership location, there was a high degree of correspondence between CAPE's initial vision of partnership and the partnerships that have formed. However, although partnerships were located more or less uniformly at the secondary level, their constitution was more varied, suggesting that partnerships had moved forward differently.

2.2.3 Partnership constitution

The first stage in developing a typology of partnership was to identify their current constitution. The potential membership was derived from the overall data (the potential across the initiative) and then interview and documentary sources were used to identify those actually participating in each partnership. It was clear that some participants were central to the partnership and to partnership activities (i.e. core); some were quite closely linked to the partnership, often through activity (i.e. aligned); others occasionally played some role, but generally remained somewhat outside it (i.e. peripheral) or not evident at all (i.e. absent). The constitution of each partnership was then derived from the data, and at case-study sites these data were triangulated using observations. From this analysis, we can begin to typify the partnerships. However, it should be reiterated that the constitution of a partnership forms only one dimension of our typification, not the basis of it.

The average CAPE partnership consisted of three core partners, five aligned partners, three peripheral partners and three who were absent. However, this 'average' does not fully convey the range of partnerships across the initiative, nor does it capture the complexity within a partnership. It serves simply as a marker against which constitution may be explored. The highest number of partners within any partnership core was six; one partnership had a core of one (the coordinator); two partnerships were not functioning and so had no core (no partner may be located at the core). The partners most commonly found at the core were the creative professionals (14 partnerships), the feeder primary schools (13 partnerships) and the CAPE coordinators (12 partnerships). Parents and institutes of further or higher education were not found at the core of any of the partnerships. The SMT and the governing body of the host school were at the core of two partnerships. Community groups were represented at the core of seven partnerships, and teachers and pupils at the core of four.

The diversification within the constitution of partnerships suggests that some partnerships have not been able to engage or retain some partners. Some partnerships were never fully formed, and there was evidence of partnership breakdown (or 'partner loss') at three sites. However, this does not suggest that such membership change is an indication of 'failure', but *without* a strong core, the partnership may be unable to successfully involve other partners. Whereas partnerships with a weak core had more peripheral or absent partners, there was a tendency for a strong partnership core to correspond with the more comprehensive membership. Some partnerships were broader in constitution than others. This suggests that a strong core is

not the sole factor implicated in comprehensive membership. It may be that a number of approaches are evident, with some partnerships aiming for inclusivity and breadth, others congealing around a very strong core and others hardly forming a partnership at all. On the basis of the available evidence, it is possible to posit three types of partnership constitution:

- **Comprehensive**: where two-thirds (or more) of potential partners were either core or aligned;
- **Partial**: where up to two-thirds of potential partners were either core or aligned;
- **Restricted**: where one-third (or less) of potential partners were either core or aligned.

The proportion of partnerships within each category is illustrated in Table 2.1 (below).

Table 2.1 Partnership constitution

Comprehensive *N*	Partial *N*	Restricted *N*	Total *N*
7	11	3	21

Source: *NFER Stage 2 evaluation of CAPE UK*

How partnerships approached the implementation of creative activities was influenced by their constitution. A partnership was less likely to engage in activities involving their feeder primary schools if those schools were peripheral to the partnership or were excluded from it. However, the constitution of the partnership is only one dimension of it; in itself, it does not represent a basis on which to assess the success or otherwise of different approaches to implementation.

2.2.4 Partnership priorities

Priorities within the partnerships reflected both the constitution of the partnership and the influence of the individual partners. For example, creative professionals tended to express different priorities than those advanced by headteachers or members of the SMT. When a creative professional was at the core of the partnership, then priorities reflected their influence:

Interviewer: *What have been the partnership's main priorities to date?*

Interviewee: *I know that different people have different agendas and different ideas about these things. I think, for my mind, it's to, kind of, get the kids involved in art practices and thinking about art in a different way. I guess that's one of my main priorities, to expose them to new things and get them excited about it* (creative professional).

Headteachers were often concerned to direct the overall focus of the initiative while maximising its impact on a broad range of pupils:

Interviewer: *What have been the partnership's main priorities to date?*

Interviewee: *I think our main priority has been to engage those disaffected youngsters, and also to try to spread it a little bit, to try to look at ways of bringing in other people we think would benefit, but dare I say it – don't necessarily fit the* [specific funding] *criteria* (headteacher).

Coordinators expressed priorities linked to the implementation of activities, often trying to develop the partnerships and ensure that the focus extends across sites:

Interviewer: *What have been the partnership's main priorities to date?*

Interviewee: *Looking for opportunities, both at primary and secondary level, for specific groups of students to get involved in creative experiences* (coordinator).

The priorities expressed within a single partnership (and across the initiative as a whole) may be grouped under five headings:

- the curriculum;
- the pupils and their experiences or achievements;
- addressing or overcoming school-specific issues (such as disaffection or low literacy levels);
- extending the partnership outwards to include others; and
- teaching and learning.

Some partnerships had multiple priorities, or an overarching priority within which there were a series of sub-priorities. The most frequently cited priorities were the curriculum and to effect changes to pupils' experience or achievement. This desire to use creativity to enhance the curriculum may be a means of supplementing or enriching what is viewed as an inappropriate experience for some pupils. Where extending the partnership was a priority, this was not solely a focus for those identified as having a restricted constitution (two of these three appeared to be prioritising a single issue). The broadest and most inclusive partnership within the initiative prioritised four of the five issues, suggesting that priorities may be influenced by constitution, but not determined by it. With similar numbers of partnerships adopting a single or multiple focuses in each region, there was little evidence of regional differences in this respect.

Few partnerships prioritised teaching or school-specific issues. Where they did, it may indicate a desire to change the 'culture' of teaching or to raise the status of the initiative at the school level (to have it adopted within the SDP, for example). School-based issues included the wish to overcome the scepticism of colleagues, or to pursue the school's broader agenda, for example, school improvement, pupils' attendance and raising levels of

literacy and attainment. It is possible, therefore, that partnership priorities were shaped by contextual factors, reflecting aspirations to include pupils more fully, to offer positive learning experiences and enhance the curriculum. At another level, it may signal a desire to link the initiative to school or behaviour management issues, to reduce disaffection and raise attainment.

2.2.5 Perceptions of creativity within the partnerships

The range of different interpretations of 'creativity' (described in Chapter 1) was evident within CAPE UK partnerships. The concept itself was differently understood within and between partnerships. Most had either 'agreed to disagree' or decided that the energy required to reach a common definition would be better expended elsewhere. Perhaps what is significant is where creativity was seen to reside.

Using the broad definitions of creativity set out in the Robinson Report (1999), there was evidence that sectoral and democratic definitions competed with each other *within* the partnerships. For example, data from a single partnership showed that the perceptions of participants, while not at odds with each other, betray some leaning to different positions:

Interviewer: *How is creativity interpreted within the partnership?*

Interviewee: *Hmm. That's an interesting question. Interpreted? I think, at the moment it is interpreted as something that is given to them by the artists. It seems to be something that is required. It is a requisite of artists. I don't think staff yet see themselves in a creative way (headteacher).*

Interviewer: *How is creativity interpreted within the partnership?*

Interviewee: *Probably quite widely. Because I think there are those people who have the sort of broad philosophical definition that CAPE gives it, and then there are others who only see it in relation to the creative arts – so it is defined within particular subjects and particular activities* (coordinator).

Interviewer: *How is creativity interpreted within the partnership?*

Interviewee: *I think the lead people who sit around the table are all thinking on the same wavelength. We are all thinking we want to put creativity in the curriculum and we want to do it through arts-based means* (creative professional).

There were signs that some partnerships had a common definition, but little evidence of an elite definition which associated creativity with genius and inspirational insight. However, no partnership adopted a completely consensual view of what creativity is, and there was a degree to which the imposition of one definition may expose any tensions that already exist.

The role of the creative professional appeared important in this respect. A creative professional may work with a teacher whose definition of creativity

is sectoral (the creative professional is creative because she or he is a poet and all poets are creative). Such a view may hinder the spread of activity into those subject areas seen as non-arts or non-creative:

> *There is still a deep-rooted suspicion of what creativity means amongst the teachers, and by that I mean, a deep-rooted misunderstanding of what creativity means. And I think it is something that I know exists in other partnerships, where to try to get a mathematician or an English teacher or an historian to understand that creativity is something that is rooted in education and not subject based and that it isn't just art, drama, poetry, music, is very very hard* (creative professional).

The same creative professional may work with another teacher (even during the same activity) who holds a democratic definition (that creativity is evident in all people to a greater or lesser degree and working with a poet may assist in harnessing pupils' latent creative potential). The implications of these different definitions are that where one teacher may see the creative professional as a *facilitator* of creative opportunities, the other may see him or her as the *provider* of creative opportunities. In other words, where one teacher is engaged in a collaborative creative process in which they complement the creativity offered by the creative professional, the other is engaged in a process into which creativity is *added* by the presence of the creative professional.

This additive and complementary distinction may be an important feature of the relationships within a partnership. Whereas definitions can be avoided, these different perceptions of the location or source of creativity cannot. Creative professionals have to find means of 'riding' these tensions, or of turning them to the overall advantage of the partnership. For example, in one partnership, a creative professional (a sculptor) used the opportunities of working with teachers and pupils to break down perceptions of what being a sculptor is. He used the interaction with pupils to address (and undermine) elite definitions of creativity and to promote a democratic alternative of what it is to be an artist:

> *I always thought that artists were – you know – from books and they weren't real. Well, there was David Hockney, but you know – he lived in America so that didn't count. I like go in there and stand there and, 'Yes! I am a sculptor'. 'This is what I am' – you know – 'You can be one!'* (creative professional).

A number of partnerships reported 'unsatisfactory' experiences when a creative professional had adopted an elite model of creativity and/or a cultural deficit model of the pupils' abilities. Moreover, teachers resented being cast as the passive recipients of another's creative talents. Indeed, coordinators shared information about creative professionals and developed strategies to avoid those with an elite view of creativity. Some actively sought out those who shared their democratic view of creativity. The coordinator of one partnership actively avoided working with creative professionals already established in education:

> *It's just that I find they know the system so well that when they come in it's not a surprise, do you know what I mean? And I wanted the people that came in, that it would be as much for the artist an inspiration to come into a school environment that was alien almost to them, so that they could see it in a fresh way, so that they could then bring that to the students* (coordinator).

The additive and complementary distinctions associated with the different views of creativity were the source of some intra-partnership confusion or conflict. What this means in practice is that teachers resent being viewed as the 'least creative' partner, and the creative professional may resent teachers' 'intrusions' into a sphere they consider to be their own. There was evidence that the 'CAPE creative professional' plays a leading role in 'riding' or resolving such confusions and conflicts.

2.2.6 *Modus operandi*

An important feature of our analysis of partnerships was the ways in which they function. The CAPE vision of partnership was of a relatively stable group meeting regularly to discuss the planning, implementation and evaluation of creative activities. Their constitution, priorities and philosophies varied. When we examined how they work, we found similar differences.

To use one partnership as an example: according to different interviewees, the partnership met:

Weekly:

Interviewer: *How often does your partnership meet?*

Interviewee: *Well once a week, I guess, because they are there when the activities are happening. In terms of formal meetings, it used to be after the children's work session on a Wednesday night. So it would have been once a week* (deputy head).

Each term:

Interviewer: *How often does your partnership meet?*

Interviewee: *We have meetings – if we can – I suppose about once a term – a large meeting. Most of the other meetings tend to be less formal really, because I think it's just timing restrictions on other teaching staff at the other schools* (creative professional).

Or not at all:

Interviewer: *How often does your partnership meet?*

Interviewee: *Well we have* ***discussed*** *having a meeting – with the primary school. But we have not had it so far.* [The creative professional] *goes into the schools. Since October, certainly, we haven't had a partnership meeting. Whether they did beforehand, I don't know. Whether they did last year, I wouldn't be able to tell you* (coordinator).

What these data suggest is that (rather than engaging in deception) the participants perceived the activities they were involved in differently. The deputy head perceived after-school meetings with pupils as a partnership meeting. The creative professional perceived these as 'project' meetings, because they excluded key members of the partnership (such as the primary feeders and business). Alternatively, the coordinator assumed that these were not meetings at all because 'partnership' meetings were held regionally (and CAPE was seen as a partner).

These different perceptions link to issues of territoriality, role and personalised zones of activity. Furthermore, there was evidence that participants wished to escape 'initiative' identity and resisted structured meetings. What may appear to be an ambiguous *modus operandi* may, in fact, reflect a desire to escape the 'initiative overload' present within schools. Under such initiative management, teachers are 'encouraged' to take a role by senior management and meetings can be perceived as obligations rather than opportunities:

> *I think what CAPE needed to show very clearly in this school was that it wasn't just another initiative, where people just sat around in meetings talking about things because they were sort of almost instructed to go there* (creative professional).

However, although creative professionals were aware of the issues of initiative overload, some would have preferred more planning, albeit in creative, non-structured contexts. For some, their experience of partnership meetings was frustrating:

> *They are meetings to solve a problem. They are not planning meetings. They should be. We should have more meetings where we actually brainstorm things and use the resources of the partnership. We don't do enough of that, but I would say, as somebody who is very involved with other CAPE partnerships, that I think that's quite common. I don't think it's a fault only with this partnership* (creative professional).

In successfully avoiding structure (and identification as just another initiative), CAPE activities risk falling under different headings and losing overall identity or drive. However, within the initiative there was awareness that CAPE is an approach rather than a 'project' and that this approach may mesh with other areas of activity and other initiatives. How, when and where the partnership meets is therefore linked to the nature of the initiative. Decision-making takes place outside partnership meetings and may not include all partners. When a partnership forms to take decisions, it is likely that a great deal of the groundwork has already been done. This does not imply that most partnerships took decisions undemocratically, or that decisions were not contested. However, there was evidence to suggest that the concept of democracy is fluid and that some partnerships were more 'democratic' than others were. Typically, the coordinator was at the centre of decisions relating to partnership activities, often working closely with the creative professional and the school SMT. Some partnerships included teachers, pupils, the governing body, pupils, community groups, arts organisations and school support staff in decision-making, but we found no

evidence of the involvement of parents, business partners, or institutes of further and higher education (although all were involved in partnership activities to a greater or lesser degree). Teachers tended to be involved when the decision would directly or indirectly impact on their practice, and pupils tended to be involved when they were engaged, or were about to be engaged, in creative activity. From the data, we can assess the inclusive dimension of decision-making and use this to inform the typology.

On the basis of the constitution of a partnership, the priorities that have been set through implementation and the basis on which they operate, their modus operandi, it is possible to discern more inclusive approaches, inclusive and less inclusive approaches. Partnerships operating on a 'less inclusive' basis may none the less implement plans for creative activities very effectively. The location of a partnership under one 'type' serves as a means of developing our understanding of forms of partnership, rather than a means by which one can judge the efficiency of decision-making and implementation.

2.2.7 A typology of partnership

On the basis of their constitution, priorities and *modus operandi*, we can identify three partnership types:

- **the extensive partnership**;
- **the developing partnership**; and
- **the constrained partnership**.

The extensive partnership builds on previous relationships, is relatively stable, has a high degree of commitment from its members and lends itself to more widespread engagement in creative activities and their implementation across curricula areas. Its constitution, priorities and modus operandi serve to increase possibility and enhance existing potential. The research identified seven such partnerships.

Partnership A was an example of an extensive partnership, with a comprehensive constitution that included primary feeders, arts and community organisations, teachers, pupils, and the creative professional. The school-based coordinator worked across subject boundaries and prioritised the implementation of activities across the curriculum. Decision-making was fluid, but broadly democratic; the deputy head played a leading role in sustaining activities and ensuring strategic-level support. Pupils and teachers were viewed as potentially creative individuals, and the creative professional facilitated their engagement in a range of creative activities that were linked to each other.

The developing partnership may be where activities are located within a particular cluster of subjects, or identified with a specific core of individuals. It expands and contracts around this core, offering greater or lesser potential depending on a range of contextual factors. These may include the involvement of particular organisations or individuals. The research identified 11 developing partnerships.

Partnership B was an example of a developing partnership, with a partial constitution including primary feeders, a local business, community groups, pupils, teachers and parents, but the coordinator found it difficult to engage the school SMT and a range of other potential partners. A number of creative professionals had facilitated implementation, with a focus on the arts, although just prior to the evaluation, this had extended into other curriculum areas such as the humanities and languages. The secondary school in which the partnership was located had good links with its feeder primary schools, but a recent inspection had reduced the time available to develop creative activities across sites. Decision-making often rested with the coordinator and this led to a feeling of duress on occasion. A core of teachers worked with the creative professional. They were seeking to link activities more closely at the time of the research.

The constrained partnership offers fewer possibilities for engagement in creative activities and for their implementation beyond an individual subject. Activities may be as a series of 'one-off' projects that are not linked and restricted to a small cohort of participants. There were few CAPE partnerships of this type and where they did exist, it tended to reflect a difficulty in coming to terms with the demands of the initiative. The research identified three constrained partnerships.

Partnership C was an example of a constrained partnership. The original coordinator had left the school, passing on responsibility for the initiative to a colleague in the art department who was new to the school. An initial flurry of activity had subsided and teachers reported that the pressures of a recent inspection had led to reduced time with which to implement or plan further activities. The deputy head with overall responsibility for the initiative was addressing the areas identified by the inspection team, and felt that providing creative opportunities for pupils was something of a 'luxury' at the moment. Most decisions were taken by the creative professionals, who sought to maintain the constitution of the partnership in its original form. However, primary partners and community groups had not been involved in activities, or invited to partnership meetings, for some time. There were plans to 'relaunch' the initiative at some time in the future, but there was little evidence of a strategic commitment to it.

Partnerships were located within a matrix on the basis of their constitution, priorities and *modus operandi*. However, because the data gathered perceptions rather than seeking coherent philosophical approaches to implementation, partnership philosophies were used to assist the analysis rather than forming the basis of it (checking the conclusions). On the basis of this analysis, we may locate each partnership under its respective type, and these types will be used throughout the remainder of this report.

It is important to stress at this point that where partnership type may be implicated in different aspects of the initiative, such as the successful or less successful implementation, there are factors that exist outside the research that may impact on any relationship or correlation between

partnership type and implementation. That is, while there may be correlation, there is no suggestion of causation by type. It may be the case that factors outside the scope of the research are implicated in various aspects of it. The extensive, developing and constrained partnership types cannot be so easily isolated from factors that are not the focus of the evaluation.

2.3 Diversity and uniformity in partnership approaches

The approaches adopted within any partnership type display both diversity and uniformity. For example, there are nine potential subtypes of an extensive partnership. These share sufficient features to be identified as extensive partnerships, but within this type of partnership is a degree of diversity in approaches to implementation. It may be the case that a partnership type corresponds closely to a partnership's ability to implement creative activities in specific areas and in specific ways, and this will be examined later in the report.

The limits of possibility were felt most within the constrained partnership. That is, in these partnerships, certain possibilities or approaches to implementation receded, while they were enhanced and even generated within developing and extensive partnerships. There was some evidence of a regional dimension to partnership type, with partnerships based in Manchester more likely to be extensive than those based in Leeds. However, the relatively equal distribution of constrained partnerships as a percentage of CAPE partnerships in the region suggests that there was little regional influence on a partnerships located under this type.

The greatest degree of diversity can be found in those partnerships where there is greater fluidity in focus. The greatest diversity was found within developing partnerships, possibly as they experimented with or came to terms with different approaches to implementing creative activities. The diversity may be evidence of an accommodation to the notion of partnership and a struggling to define partnership.

In order to convey the extent of the diversity, it is necessary to return to the subtypes of the typology and their basis in the analysis. Each partnership may be ranked on the basis of: constitution; priorities; and *modus operandi.* Their proximity to the 'ideal type' (based on the vision of partnership expressed by CAPE UK) may then be assessed. What this process shows is that, at this stage of the initiative, there is a great deal of diversity *across* the initiative. Only one partnership matched the 'ideal' type, over half of the partnerships were quite close to it and a substantial minority were some distance away. The analysis, thus, reveals a wide range of approaches, some of which may be closer to the CAPE vision than others. This is perhaps linked to the degree to which diversity has been encouraged.

2.4 The relationship between approach and the level of awareness of, or engagement in, creative activity

There were some indications of a relationship between partnership approach and levels of awareness of, or engagement in, creative activities – though it was not possible to assess levels of engagement in creative activities from some data. For example, coordinators often ensured that funds provided enhanced the experiences of children who may have fallen outside the specific funding criteria.[1] Therefore, these additional 'beneficiaries' do not show up in the records, but may be identified through interview and observation. Notwithstanding such caveats, a relationship between partnership type and engagement in, or awareness of, creative activity may be suggested.

Within constrained partnerships, awareness of the initiative and creative activity was limited to a small core of teachers, creative professionals and pupils who may have been engaged in creative activities. The nature of the partnership appears to have acted as a brake on engagement, or at least limited engagement to this small core. Where a school was under pressure of inspection, or faced issues concerning pupil attainment, there were difficulties in promoting the initiative and increasing engagement in creative activities. In extensive and developing partnerships, this relationship was less pronounced, perhaps more complex and contextually influenced. Awareness and engagement in creativity and in creative activities varied within and across these partnerships. There was evidence that a range of influences enhanced engagement and awareness, such as supportive and active school management, regional support, good communication and leadership within the partnership. These issues will be addressed more fully in Chapters 3 and 4, where an analysis of planning and implementation points to their actual effect.

[1] *For example, the ESF criteria restricted the focus to young people aged over 14 years.*

3. PLANNING CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

3.1 Introduction

The CAPE UK initiative is in some ways rare in that it offered time and resources for planning creative activities prior to their implementation. The initiative was designed so that planning would form a major dimension of partnership activities. As a consequence, one of the objectives of the evaluation was:

> **(ii) to describe and evaluate the nature of planning as undertaken within the overall programme.**

Interviews, observations and documentary analysis provided evidence with which to address the role of planning within the initiative and so research this objective and its associated sub-questions.

3.2 Experience of planning

There were patterns within the participants' experience of planning that relate to their different roles within the initiative and to their proximity or distance from implementation. There also appeared to be a dynamic and partnership-specific dimension to planning, where some partnerships were more or less engaged in planning at many or all levels and where other partnerships were not. Most planning took place within the partnerships as constituted, not extending beyond them to engage possible partners in the wider community, or in business. Moreover, most of this planning took place around creative activities, close to the point of implementation. There was less evidence of long-term or strategic planning at the partnership level and, although some partnerships did have longer-term aspirations, these were not contained within or expressed through a coherent 'plan'. At the point of data collection, all partnerships were operating in a mode that may be termed 'action planning', where activities form the focus of the partnership and planning tends to take place around their continuation or replication. However, within this mode, there remained differences or 'types'. The degree of involvement in planning and the level at which the various participants were involved can be ascertained from the data. These levels covered four broad areas:

- **(i)** planning at the level of activity;
- **(ii)** planning at the level of partnership;
- **(iii)** planning at the regional level; and
- **(iv)** planning at the overall (CAPE) initiative level.

The identification of four clear approaches to planning is based on the presence of key personnel and their experience at these four levels.

3.2.1 The experience of planning

CAPE coordinators were involved in planning to a very high degree at levels (i) and (ii): at the level of activity and the level of partnership. To varying degrees, they were involved at level (iii): the regional level, and some had an input, but generally a more limited role, at level (iv): the initiative level.

Creative professionals occupied an ambiguous position within a partnership. They were central to planning creative activities and yet were often peripheral figures within the school or within a school cluster. A number of partnerships attempted to address this by identifying a set day or time where teachers or partners may access the creative professional. Others adopted less formal strategies, bringing in the creative professional at key stages during the planning of creative activities. In some partnerships, the creative professional was a central figure, initiating and leading planning. In other partnerships, teachers and coordinators did the planning and drew from a list or 'bank' of creative professionals when required. The experience of creative professionals, therefore, varied in relation to the partnership within which they worked. Moreover, some creative professionals worked across partnerships and there was the emergence of the 'lead creative professional', an individual who had experience of the initiative and who worked with more than one partnership, or assisted where a partnership had difficulties in planning or implementing activities.

All of the 18 headteachers, deputy heads, or members of school SMTs who took part in the research were drawn from the secondary schools within the partnership. Their experience of planning was largely of delegation to the coordinator, the creative professional and to other teachers. A number of headteachers (eight) reported experience at partnership, regional and initiative level, but overall their 'hands-on' engagement was low. In only two of the 21 partnerships were there signs of very close SMT involvement at level (i): in the planning of individual creative activities. However, the absence of SMT members in planning does not necessarily suggest a lack of interest in, or commitment to, CAPE, but may reflect usual practice, where the implementation of initiatives tends to be delegated to a designated member of staff.

The pupils within partnership schools were identified by other participants as key partners in planning, particularly at level (i), the level of activity. Many partnerships took pains to provide opportunities for pupils to contribute ideas to proposed activities and see them as important members of the partnership. The evidence suggests that pupils were involved in planning, but there may be a degree of difference in the perceptions of pupils and the perceptions of adults concerning their involvement. In general, those pupils interviewed (33) felt that their ideas and contributions were valued in planning, but they were not necessarily the 'key players'. In some partnerships, pupils were involved more than in others.

The analysis of participants' experiences was compared with observations of partnership planning and to documentary evidence provided by the partnerships. What this shows is that regardless of role (coordinator, creative professional, headteacher, or deputy head, pupil, governor, etc.), the type of partnership (see typology in Chapter 2) influenced its approach to planning.

3.3 Typifying partnership approaches to planning

On the basis of our analysis of the data (above), and in order to address the aims of the research, it is possible to present a range of approaches to planning that are in evidence across the partnerships:

(a) coordinator-led and inclusive;

(b) coordinator-led and exclusive;

(c) creative professional-led and inclusive; and

(d) non-directed and exclusive.

3.3.1 Coordinator-led and inclusive planning

Coordinator-led and inclusive planning was the most common approach and was evident in 12 of the 21 partnerships. The level of involvement in planning within this type ranged from levels (i) and (ii), activity to partnership, for most participants, but with the coordinator taking a leading role at levels (iii) and (iv), the levels of region and initiative. The core of coordinators helping to shape the direction of CAPE was to be found within these 12 partnerships. This approach was not wholly dependent upon partnership type. Where the partnership was extensive, then coordinator-led and inclusive planning may be seen as a commitment to inclusivity, rather than as a necessary strategy, for example, to address the lack of personnel within a developing partnership.

From the analysis of data, we can ascertain that five partnerships had adopted an inclusive approach to planing as a formal strategy. Other partnerships may have adopted the approach on the basis of desire or necessity; that is, they may sometimes have wished to adopt an inclusive approach and may sometimes have been compelled to adopt one by circumstance, but for these two partnerships it was not possible to determine which. What may be significant is that across this approach as a whole, there was a tendency to include the SMT in planning strategies. This suggests that coordinator-led and inclusive planning was the most effective model for engaging the school management.

3.3.2 Coordinator-led and exclusive planning

Evident in four of the 21 partnerships, the coordinator-led and exclusive approach to planning was less prevalent. The level of involvement in planning within these partnerships varied from levels (i) to (iv) (activity through to initiative) for the coordinator, but was restricted to level (i) and occasionally level (ii) (activity to partnership) for all other partners. The distinction between this and the coordinator-led and inclusive approach is captured in the distinction between necessity and intent. Where it may be difficult to discern the degree of necessity leading to coordinator-led and inclusive approaches to planning in some partnerships (above), here the intent was clearly that the coordinator takes control of planning and either inadvertently or purposefully excludes others from it. It was difficult to discern the degree to which coordinators actively excluded other partners; the data suggest that in at least one partnership it was an approach borne of necessity (where the partnership effectively consists of the coordinator) and in others it was a strategy that was not necessarily exclusive in intent. The clear focus of the partnership and the drive of the coordinator may be behind the approach, but planning can be seen as coordinator dependent none the less.

Coordinator-led and exclusive planning showed less evidence of the involvement of SMT members. It was, therefore, an approach that may have identified the initiative with an individual and/or a particular department within the school. An example of this may be taken from one partnership where the planning takes place primarily around a specific activity (as opposed to a series or range of activities) and within a particular department. The coordinator (as head of that department) in effect controlled access to creative activities within the partnership and, whilst leading the planning around the implementation of creative activities, restricted planning to that single activity to some degree.

3.3.3 Creative professional-led and inclusive

In two CAPE partnerships, the approach to planning was creative professional-led and inclusive. The creative professional took a leading role at all levels. Other partners were involved at levels (i) to (ii) (activity to partnership), with a degree of division of tasks evident. Creative professional-led and inclusive planning only occurred in extensive partnerships and may, therefore, be linked to partnership constitution or membership at any one time. However, in both partnerships where this approach was evident, there were replacement coordinators who had quite recently adopted the role. This suggests that the creative professional-led and inclusive approach to planning may be a responsive model, taking over when coordinator-led and inclusive planning is interrupted or breaks down. Further research would be required before such an assertion could be substantiated, but it presents itself as a possible factor. Accordingly, creative

professional-led and inclusive planning could be seen as a strategy through which fractures in partnership approaches are, or could be, overcome. It demands the close involvement of the lead creative and in both partnerships where it was evident, it drew on the support of the SMT. This would suggest that where coordinators were unable to continue in their role, this approach could form part of any contingency arrangements.

3.3.4 Non-directed and exclusive planning

Non-directed and exclusive approaches to planning were apparent in three partnerships. The pattern within these partnerships was of engagement at levels (i) and (ii) (activity and partnership) by numerous partners, but with little evidence of planning at levels (iii) to (iv) (region and initiative), on the part of any of the participants. The coordinator would typically not attend regional meetings, and any creative involvement in planning would be limited to activities. Planning may have come to an end following an initial 'flurry', and planning creative activities may have low priority in the face of other pressures. Non-directed and exclusive planning was non-directed in that no single partner took responsibility for planning, although the coordinator may continue to hold responsibility for the initiative within the partnership. This approach was associated with both constrained and developing partnerships, where many potential partners had either not been engaged in the initiative or had dropped out of it. Non-directed and exclusive planning may also be associated with 'planning blight', that is, an absence of planning activity and/or long-term strategy.

Although the typification of planning does contain evaluative judgement, it is not necessarily the case that the different approaches are more or less effective than each other, although the non-directed and exclusive approach was clearly associated with difficulties at the partnership level. However, planning that is driven forward by a single individual (such as the coordinator-led and exclusive and the creative professional-led and exclusive) does pose some risks to progress if contingencies for their loss to the initiative are not made. It may be, therefore, that in the longer term, the coordinator-led and inclusive approach proves more effective, as it may be able to cope better with changes to personnel. This approach also engaged the SMT more effectively, an essential feature of embedding partnership planning within the overall School Development Plan. The levels of planning, from activity to initiative, (i) to (iv), varied within and between these types, but the general trends outlined above remained. Arguably, it may be easier to increase engagement at each level of planning in partnerships that adopt a coordinator-led and inclusive approach, than it would be in partnerships where other approaches were evident, were this in fact desired.

3.4 Revisions and modifications to plans

The concept of the original 'partnership plan' has been discussed in Chapter 2 and whilst for some partnership these original documents only really represent a statement of intent (and indeed within such a dynamic initiative one may expect substantial revisions), other partnerships have kept very close to them:

Interviewer: *Have there been modifications to your plan?*

Interviewee: *At partnership level, I'm proud to say no. When we started off in '96, our original bid for CAPE was to concentrate on community broadcasting as a way of enhancing learning – which was quite unusual. And since then, for all sorts of reasons – and quite rightly – many partnerships have decided to shift emphasis, as they've tried to build on their strengths and they've developed weaknesses and so on. I'm proud to say that our focus remains the same* (coordinator).

An examination of the original document submitted to CAPE UK confirmed that the short- and medium-term objectives of this partnership had been met in the manner set out, and that long-term objectives may be met by strategies currently being pursued. Other than minor modification to some specific activities and to the overall partnership constitution, the 'partnership plan' had remained relatively stable.

Other partnerships have all but dispensed with their original plan. In one partnership, for example, planning has been more fluid, subject to continual modification around a series of core aims or values:

Interviewer: *Have there been modifications to your plan?*

Interviewee: *Inasmuch as that it is organic and changes all the time – yes. In terms of the fundamental principles that CAPE are setting out to challenge and achieve – no. I think they are very strong and haven't changed and I don't necessarily see a situation where they would, because things are so simple and so strong. But again, at the local level, things change all the time* (creative professional).

In another partnership, modifications were linked to resources:

Interviewer: *Have there been modifications to your plan?*

Interviewee: *We have not had anything which has failed. We have not had anything which has meant dramatic rethinks. The partnership artist has worked very well; the artists that we have had linked with the projects have eventually worked out well. We have had to shift planning on to specific projects because of the time commitments or availability of resources, and they have tended to be done by the project coordinator. We've shifted our emphasis when the funding shifted. I think when we very first started out, before CAPE was, I won't say restricted, but at least it was slightly compromised by the ESF target group.*

> *We had to replan our target group. Now, I would also say that that was actually a blessing in disguise. Because I think that by ESF focusing our attention on disaffected 15-plus, it's stopped woolly discussion about whole school. It made us focus and I think that part of the planning had to change* (coordinator).

Across the initiative, the extent to which the original plan had been modified depended in many ways on the intent of the original document and on participants' experience since it was written. Where a partnership was formed around very clear objectives, then changes seemed to be limited. Moreover, for the majority of partnerships formed around a set of core values or shared aims, the plan was a statement of their aspirations and it may be more productive to examine the basis for changes to these aspirations (albeit, expressed as a plan or series of plans) than rest the analysis on a single original document.

Despite evidence that funding issues have affected partnership planning across the initiative, this was not the main source of modifications to plans. On the basis of their experience, participants attached significance to a range of issues, which included:

- adopting too structured an approach to creative activities;
- staff turnover, illness or unavailability;
- the pressures presented by the school timetable;
- the planning of over-elaborate or over-ambitious activities;
- the influence of tests or exams on participation;
- the compatibility of personnel to activity; and
- poor management at the school or partnership level.

The most commonly cited cause of modification was that partnerships adopted too structured a plan, followed by staffing concerns, school pressures and over-ambition. Interviewees' perspectives differed according to their role within the initiative. Coordinators were concerned with structure, funding, staffing, school-level pressures and over ambition. Headteachers were more aware of changes made on the basis of funding, and creative professionals were concerned primarily with structure and staffing. This variation may be related to participants' proximity to the activities and responsibilities in planning them.

The desire for structure was related to issues of budgetary control and school management. Most agreed that planning within a school requires clarity and it was this lack of initial clarity that concerned headteachers:

> *I think the modification from the original plans – it seems such a long time ago now that we started to take part – I think that modification is forced on us by the lack of interpretation on the financial aspect. I think we floundered a little bit. There was a degree, I believe, of uncertainty about where the funding was coming from, how long it was going to run for and how long we were going to use it for* (headteacher).

> *I mean what I think is important is that we have a strategic view of where we want to go, ... and I think it's important that we know where we are. When you are living in a time of rapidly changing funding regimes and everything else, the danger is you chase the funds and don't know what you want to do with them, and I am always very clear to say 'We know what we want to do'. If the funds don't provide that, then we don't do it* (headteacher).

The provision of space for creative planning may have led those responsible for the management of the initiative to apply pressure for greater structure, something others within the initiative were seeking to avoid. A creative professional summed up these tensions when he discussed the role of 'networks' within the initiative, the ways in which informality and lack of structure encourage creativity:

Interviewee: *One thing for me personally, I was always a bit suspicious of networks before I got involved in CAPE. I now realise after years of working in an isolated environment ... how this whole network is at the core of CAPE. You don't need a building, you don't need somewhere that's identifiable, the network exists. The danger is that people then want to formalise the network. And one of the things that's happening at the moment with an individual in* [organisation] *is that he wants everybody to get on email. He wants everyone to be networked.*

Interviewer: *So you get a membership list and it becomes an organisation?*

Interviewee: *It becomes an institution and people say 'Oh shit! I don't want anything to do with that'* (creative professional).

According to this perspective, the planning within a partnership has to be fluid in order to attract the creative professionals, yet structured in order to be managed. The coordinator is at the crux of the tension. Modifications to partnership plans may therefore be seen as an attempt to work across existing structures, or to restructure relationships within the partnership once the partnership moved beyond aspirational form. Most partnerships would have been unable to anticipate the impact of funding changes brought about by the successful bid for ESF funding. However, other impacts were more predictable. Yet there was little evidence that the effect the school year would have on planning had been anticipated, or that contingencies were made for illness, or the loss of key personnel. Planning in most partnerships rested somewhat precariously on the shoulders of one or two individuals. The appointment of CAPE development workers at regional level is recognition that medium- and long-term planning requires considerable attention across the initiative.

Despite the difficulties experienced in planning, the overall perception of those taking part in the initiative was that it had been effective. The funds provided for planning were appreciated, particularly so by creative professionals with experience of other school-, or community-based, initiatives. Planning allowed misunderstandings to be overcome. In one partnership, for example, some of the teachers within partnership schools

expected a 'packaged' arts intervention, where they would play a limited role in the planning (or delivery) of it. By involving these teachers in planning with creative professionals, pupils and other partners, it was possible to overcome their misconceptions of what CAPE was attempting to do and move forward with a clearer view of the objectives of the initiative. Where there was concern that the initiative was too 'woolly' or broad, collective planning within the time created helped to map out the expectations of the different partners. It also helped to level some of the barriers which existing professional identities and relationships posed, by disrupting the usual way in which things are done in schools:

> *Good planning is when you get the right people together at the right times. And that means having a flexible attitude to who is involved with planning, not just getting the people who are heads of the various departments together because they are heads of departments* (creative professional).

Learning to live with this flexibility and ambiguity is perhaps one of the most valued outcomes of this process. The initiative required considerable investment in planning, and it is significant that few partnerships reported failures. Rather, they recounted a difficult but invigorating process, which challenged perceptions of how things are done in schools and offered new routes to achieving their collective objectives.

3.5 Planning and decision-making at the level of CAPE UK

CAPE UK encompasses all dimensions of the initiative, but for the purposes of this section we use the term CAPE UK to refer to the coordination and management structure which underpins the initiative, and lies outside the local partnerships. Examining planning and decision-making at the level of CAPE UK was related to, but not a major feature of, the evaluation of planning across the initiative. However, just as partnership planning and decision-making has undergone revision, so has that within CAPE UK itself. Examining these changes will allow us to point to some of the features of the successfully managing change within the initiative.

The most immediate and potentially far reaching change at the level of CAPE UK concerned that of 'steerage' or coordination at the initiative level. CAPE UK was envisaged as a partnership with schools, creative professionals, five LEAs and two RABs and a range of arts organisations, businesses, community and voluntary groups. A Board of Trustees, composed of representatives from education, business and the arts, has overall responsibility for strategy and running of the charity. The original intention was that local partnerships, each focusing on a high school and associated primary schools, would have a considerable level of autonomy. A regional steering group in each of the two areas was to provide a network to support, advise and monitor the work. On this group would sit various individuals including representatives of the LEAs and RABs along with

other individuals in a consultative or advisory capacity. The CAPE UK central unit would focus on research, evaluation, advocacy and the generation of resources in order to sustain the initiative long term.

Some partners were more engaged that others. For example, where the commitment of one of the Greater Manchester LEAs to CAPE was extensive and included the support of a specific member of staff, other LEAs in the region did not contribute such resources and were less involved. This is perhaps to be expected as these three LEAs only had one high school within the initiative. The original intention was to tie this network of Greater Manchester LEAs together through an organisation working across the four LEAs in relation to education and training. However, due to a series of unforeseen circumstances, outside the control of the organisation, the education focus of this network was dissolved and no replacement structure was put into place by the LEAs. However, both RABs continued to give considerable support and in one case, considerable levels of staff resources

The research found that other issues affected the management and monitoring procedures within the initiative overall. It became clear that the proposed level of autonomy was incompatible with the level of accountability required by funding streams such as ESF.

It had been intended that the two regional steering groups were to monitor creative activities by reviewing proposals for such activities. Partnerships were to submit their proposals to the group, but this process proved to be unworkable because of the time required to work through each proposal. Decisions concerning funding of individual activities were therefore delegated to regional coordinators and taken out of this structure. As a consequence, CAPE personnel and the regional coordinators, who were notionally seconded from their respective LEAs, became responsible for maintaining the focus of the initiative:

> *Initially it was supposed to be the steering group who passed all the plans, but it would come highly recommended from us and we would recommend almost all of it. What we would be looking at would be whether we thought it would be rigourous enough – I suppose. Whether it fitted in with the CAPE philosophy. At first that was definitely an issue, because schools used to have more of an 'artists in schools' approach, so we had to challenge some of the plans* (CAPE personnel).

Maintaining overall focus therefore became one of the major tasks of the regional coordinators. This was in part supported through regular meetings at regional level with school coordinators but still with the intention that the planning and generation of creative plans were located within the schools. Within the structure as originally conceived, coordination would lie primarily within the local partnership and coordination from CAPE regional team would be limited. However, there was a need for greater support for some partnerships in terms of planning, implementing activities and developing the initiative. In Leeds, the higher number of partnerships (involving 17

high schools initially) made this difficult for one part-time coordinator to support and as a consequence, a development worker was appointed to work alongside the LEA regional coordinator.

The appointment of a development worker through CAPE resources in Leeds built the capacity to provide partnerships with greater support in planning and implementing creative actives. Decisions concerning partnerships in Leeds are now based on this increased capacity, allowing CAPE to meet the concerns of partnerships, by for example, going into schools and working with school-based coordinators in developing plans for creative activities. However, there was evidence, at times, of tensions both at local partnership and initiative levels, between the original concept of autonomous partnerships, operating within a supportive network, and the need for CAPE to exert a more central control, largely due to the requirement to be accountable for complex funding streams.

At a strategic level, a degree of structure was provided in Manchester by the city's LEA. In Leeds, the LEA remained slightly more distant, although continued to support the contribution and commitment of the regional coordinator. The most significant regional feature that influenced decision-making was the embedding of the initiative within the respective LEAs. With the introduction of 'Fair Funding', Manchester LEA had identified CAPE as an activity within its response to the DfEE's Education Development Plan and was committed to it:

> *The commitment to CAPE is very strong – very, very, strong. It always has been. They value their creativity and are creative through alignment to that. I think they're very excited by the fact that schools are excited by what's going on in CAPE. There's no problem there* (CAPE personnel).

In Leeds, the support was less structured, and there was a degree to which the regional coordinator had freedom but was none the less more 'isolated'. Moreover, both LEAs underwent OFSTED inspection during this period and both were placed under intense pressure to review their services in the light of this inspection. Ironically, despite the continued commitment of Manchester LEA to the initiative, reorganisation of the School Improvement Service left little time for the LEA coordinator to commit to direct support of CAPE schools. At the time of the evaluation, there was considerable uncertainly over many core services provided by Leeds LEA. This level of uncertainty/volatile environment placed considerable pressure on CAPE's capacity to respond to the needs of schools for support.

Decision-making that rests on the contribution of regional coordinators is to some extent contingent on the level of support they receive within their LEA. The support they are able to offer partnerships rests on their continued ability to make a case for CAPE at a strategic level. The evidence suggests that where CAPE is embedded in policy, this case is easier to make than where it is not.

Complementing these more formal routes for decision-making in both

Leeds and Manchester are a range of CAPE personnel and associated individuals, consultants and advisers. These constitute a network around the initiative and draw on previous professional relationships. CAPE draws on a number of individuals with high status within the creative and educational community, working in a paid, consultative or purely advocacy capacity. As a consequence CAPE, as an organisation, benefits from their extensive experience and uses their judgements in its decision-making procedures. At a Board level these may be expressed formally, but there are also indirect routes that feed directly to the chief executive.

This somewhat complex network therefore exerts an influence that is mediated by the chief executive, who has to straddle the consequences of any competing agendas. However and despite these different agendas, a series of shared values assists the process:

> *I think there's a group, whatever our differences and styles, there is a group that have very strong shared values. And it's a difficult group to manage because people work for other organisations, so they're buffeted by other needs. But come down to it – the bottom line – and everybody's fundamentally driven by the same set of values* (CAPE personnel).

At the operational level, decisions are taken in the field and fed back to the centre via an extensive formal and informal network. The distinction between strategic and operational decision-making is blurred to some degree, by the interdependency of the personnel and their common overall goal. The organisation can respond very quickly to events at an operational level as it receives constant feedback from a variety of sources. Where there is internal criticism of CAPE UK, it tends to be directed at the capacity to support the achievement of specific goals rather than the goals themselves.

In summary, the planning and decision-making capacity of CAPE has both changed and been enhanced through their experience of implementation. Less compromising structures have been replaced with those that reflect the immediate and often shifting demands of the participants, albeit within a system that still maintains initiative focus and promotes CAPE's overall vision. These changes have been both reactive and proactive, reflecting the flexible and dynamic nature of the initiative. The consequences of them have been that a closer degree of support is offered to partnerships, and the organisation as a whole can react more quickly to issues or concerns as they emerge.

4. IMPLEMENTING CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

4.1 Introduction

The evaluation's third and fourth research objectives were:

> **(iii) to ascertain the extent and effectiveness of the implementation of plans**
>
> **(iv) to assess the degree to which creativity has been built into planning and has been increased or advanced in the implementation of the plans, in relation to both the development of creative teaching methods and the development of creativity in the learner.**

This chapter will address the latter of these aims first: examining creativity and planning before addressing issues of effectiveness. In addition, it will address the sub-question carried over from Chapter 2: *are different partnership approaches more or less successful in processes of implementation?* It brings together the key features of planning and implementation, their effectiveness and the success of different approaches in a coherent form.

4.2 Creativity and planning

The fourth objective of the evaluation (see above) contained within it a series of sub-questions:

1. Is the development of creative teaching methods evident in plans?
2. Is the development of creativity in the learner evident in plans?
3. Is the development of creative teaching methods evident in the activities mounted?
4. Is the development of creativity in the learner evident in the activities mounted?
5. What is the relationship between the development of creative teaching methods and the development of creativity in the learner in: (a) the plans and (b) the activities mounted?

Each of these questions was addressed through the analysis of a range of evidence.

4.2.1 The development of creative teaching methods in partnership plans and in partnership planning

The participants distinguished between two related aspects of planning: the process and the outcome of that process (the plan). This distinction is significant in that the plan was perceived to be less important than the process, which was identified as a creative activity in itself. This also has implications for our analysis of plans, as these were widely perceived to provide a framework for creative activities, rather than to stand as formal documents in themselves. Based on an analysis of the plans submitted to CAPE UK, there appeared to be an assumption that creative teaching methods were being developed. The plans and other documents do not, in themselves, provide evidence that justified these assumption. However, other evidence shows that strategies had been used to develop creative teaching methods, both in planning and implementation.

One of these strategies was to enhance teaching through work with creative professionals: to make it more interesting or engaging. In a number of partnerships (five), we found a general belief in 'contagion', whereby the presence or input of a creative professional would 'rub off' on teachers. However, we also found evidence of resistance to this view. Some teachers recognised that implicit in this model is the assumption that they are the non-creative partners. In one partnership, a coordinator talked of their resentment of always being '*told what to do*'. Where partnerships did seek to develop creative teaching methods through planning, it appears that they had to do so sensitively and carefully.

It was illustrated in Chapter 3 that planning was an organic process: a creative activity. The lack of reference to creative teaching methods in plans did not correspond to the absence of the development of creative teaching methods in planning. The distinction between a partnership plan and partnership planning is important because it provided participants with a way around some of the tensions raised when attempting to change teaching practice. Planning brought teachers and creative professionals together to bring about changes to practice without alienating practitioners by identifying deficiencies. Planning creative activities involved the use of strategies such as role-play, or role-reversal between teacher, pupil and creative professional. This allowed the incumbent of a role (the teacher, for example) to stand outside it and deal with suggestions for change. Moreover, within this process, there was recognition of the difficulties involved in encouraging teachers to experiment or take risks in their classrooms. Seven partnership coordinators, who reported that they had not been able to develop creative teaching methods, cited the influence of school-level factors such as assessment or inspection. Planning had to take on board such issues in order to gain support at SMT level.

For the creative professional, the influence of these school-level issues could be frustrating, but in general, creative professionals worked with other partners to decide the teaching methods most appropriate for the site and activity. In one partnership, for example, the introduction of creative

teaching methods was addressed through a separate working party that was linked to CAPE activities. Here, there was a concern to overcome pupils' experiences of teaching as 'death by worksheet' and to develop new approaches through CAPE-related activities. In conclusion, the data point to an absence of references to creative teaching methods in plans, but identify their presence in the planning process itself.

4.2.2 The development of creativity in the learner in partnerships plans and in partnership planning

The data concerning the development of creativity in the learner shows much more unanimity between participants. Furthermore, there was evidence of how this may be achieved in partnership plans, such as by distinguishing how the activity differed from existing patterns of learning or how it offered opportunities that enhance existing patterns of learning.

In our examination of those plans submitted to CAPE UK, we found that a partnership plan presented CAPE with an appeal to support an activity that consisted of a single or series of learning objectives, achieved through specified processes or learning scenarios. An important feature of these learning scenarios was risk-taking, which was designed into an activity through various strategies, usually involving disrupting the usual models of learning in one or more ways. These strategies included:

- situational change (moving the site of learning);
- content change (changing the learning activity so that it matched the perceived interests of pupils);
- process change (encouraging more collaborative pupil participation in a learning activity);
- outcome change (suspending the formal curriculum and its related assessment methods); and
- the suspension of sanctions (permitting challenges to behavioural or school norms).

All the plans examined showed evidence of at least one of these strategies; many showed evidence of two or more.

Interview data suggested that young people themselves played a central role in partnership planning, particularly at the level of activity. Among creative professionals, there was recognition that pupils' perceptions and teachers' professional knowledge played an important role in creating contexts where pupils felt able to take risks. In contrast, however, at the level of school management, developing creativity in the learner was seen as a strategy to overcome pupils' difficulties. For them, plans and planning were routes through which disengaged pupils were re-engaged with learning through the provision of creative activities. In the view of one headteacher, creative activities were needed to reduce the 'deadening impact' of the Literacy Hour at Year 7.

Overall, the development of creativity in the learner *can* be discerned in plans through the use of strategies outlined above. Moreover, examining the process of planning once again provides additional (and perhaps more compelling) evidence that developing creative learning forms a central plank of partnership aspirations. None the less, these issues remain only partially exposed until we move to examine the conditions under which such aspirations could be realised: by examining the transition from planning to implementation.

4.2.3 The development of creative teaching methods in the activities mounted

The transition from plans to activity permitted experimentation with teaching strategies across a range of learning contexts. An analysis of the data shows that the roots of experimentation were in the relationships that were developed within the learning situation. Where these relationships were based on a degree of trust and willingness to take risks, then teaching methods were more likely to change.

It may be useful to examine the conditions that were perceived to be conducive to the implementation of creative teaching methods before moving on to discuss those methods that were evident. Based on our analysis of the data, such conditions may be summarised thus:

- evidence of a high level of trust existed between teachers, pupils and creative professionals during implementation of creative activities;
- the creative professional and the teacher demonstrated a high degree of professional mobility and to some extent there was a blurring of role, or sharing of roles;
- the learning outcomes were valued by those taking part; and
- pupils were active participants in the learning process.

These conditions were either present, or created, with extensive partnerships displaying a greater range of these conditions than others were. The participants strove to create these conditions by adopting strategies such as the blurring of professional role:

> *The best CAPE artists are those who come in with their art and, after a period of time working in the school, are not quite sure whether they are really still artists or teachers. Their role changes through the process of doing it and they are quite happy for that to happen. Now, those are the people who tend to, well they don't lose any of the intensity of their art, but they gain from the experience of communicating creativity to the teachers and the kids. And those are the people we work with again and again* (creative professional).

Some creative professionals did report, however, that by entering into such relationships they would dilute their creative abilities or would lose the intensity of their art. In such cases, it becomes a demeaning rather than a

liberating experience and the threat this poses to their professional identity may lead them to withdraw from contexts where such demands are made. Related to this were those difficulties that emerged concerning the degree of professional mobility that was required on the part of the participants. It may be difficult, for example, for a classroom teacher to 'hand over' responsibility to a non-teacher, or to resist intervention when another professional is involved. In order to implement a creative activity, a degree of cooperation and trust between teacher and creative professional is required. Where the creative professional may be concerned with offering a creative experience, the teacher may be concerned that this is offered in a context of relative stability or 'order'. Where this mutual recognition of professional priorities was not evident, then the relationship between classroom teacher and creative professional could break down:

Interviewee: *Well, it was a highly recommended script-writing company from London and we discussed class size and age groups and everything before she arrived. But when she got here, she seemed to be just wanting to work with some highly able students who were going to be responsive and she didn't really have any classroom control skills.*

Interviewer: *It just broke down?*

Interviewee: *There was a teacher with her – and it wasn't sort of a riot or anything like that – but the students didn't respond particularly well, didn't get a great deal out of the day. And the teacher was just glad when it was all over really. But, you know, we live and learn* (coordinator).

The evidence of pupils' experience suggests that once trust had been established, then the creative professional (or other partner) could enhance the teaching experience. Some of the pupils interviewed were sensitive to external scrutiny of their work and trust could be developed by the positive comments of a creative professional. The involvement of such an individual may have granted the activity greater status in the eyes of the participants, as pupils who lacked confidence benefited from 'external' praise:

> *Because your work is your work and you say it's good anyway, because it's your work. But when somebody else, like a textile designer, like* [the designer], *she thought my design was really good and because she was like a designer, I was like 'Yes!'* (pupil).

Once the pupils came to trust the creative professional, then a 'new' teaching context could transcend those assumptions of pupils as passive and somewhat indifferent participants in the process of learning.

4.2.4 Evidence of the development of creative teaching methods in the activities mounted

The plans submitted to CAPE UK, to fund creative activities, convey the art form with which the activity was associated. Many of the partnerships used multiple art forms (across curriculum subjects), but identifying the

primary 'arts location' of the activity[1] allowed us to assess if some art forms were more likely to be associated with the development of creative teaching methods (Table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1: The number of proposals for providing creative activities by art form

Activities implemented	Dance	Drama	Photography/ film	Music	Art	Design	Literacy/ poetry	Total
	N	*N*	*N*	*N*	*N*	*N*	*N*	*N*
Leeds	4	9	5	12	10	5	4	49
Greater Manchester	3	5	1	4	19	12	6	50
Total	7	14	6	16	29	17	10	99

Source: *NFER Stage 2 evaluation*

The table shows that relatively few proposals were submitted with dance and photography or film as their primary arts location. The majority of proposals were related to art, design, music and drama. Observations of dance activities suggested that teachers were less able to participate in the activity as full partners, and other activities presented greater opportunity of engagement. For example, in one partnership, a project located under photography and film was observed. Here, the teacher and creative professional met before the activity and discussed how they may adopt teaching methods appropriate both to the activity and to the pupils taking part:

> [Teacher] *tells* [Creative Professional] *about the disruptions they are likely to encounter today. There are interviews to attend; a corridor can only be used before lunch. The filming of the staffroom has to be completed before ten, or the teachers will have to step over the cables during their break.* [CP] *talks about the hand-held camera, digital filmmaking technology, editing and sound effects. The equipment around us belongs to the school. He shows* [T] *how to link the digital camera to a monitor, an old portable TV he's 'borrowed' from somewhere, so that the director gets a look down the viewfinder, as well as the camera operator. He uses cables from old lights, utilising the old equipment the pupils have brought up from the drama studio.* [T] *and the pupils have designed the storyboards, and* [CP] *suggests short cuts, points out sequential errors and asks how things can be changed around to save time; 'Time is money,' he says. The teacher recognises that things cannot be done sequentially, in a linear process, but* [CP] *changes it around even more. At first what he is suggesting appears abstract, but it means that the equipment is only carried a short distance from scene to scene. The pupils are not here and*

[1] *These art forms are broad and each includes a range of activities. For example, 'Art' includes drawing, sketching, painting and graffiti art. Whereas 'Design' includes fashion, architecture, jewellery making, computer graphics and printing (see Harland, Kinder and Hartley, 1995, p. 70).*

> [T] *is becoming concerned that these changes will disrupt the day.* [CP] *argues that they will have to learn to think on their feet, that the teaching has to reflect the reality of filmmaking. They have to learn quickly, and any errors are expensive* (observation).

The activity lent itself to collaborative engagement in developing creative teaching methods. The teacher was able to draw on her own creative abilities in drama, developing the scenes and the narrative; the creative professional was able to buttress her abilities, but also to disrupt her conception of teaching. It is perhaps significant that the pupils were not present during this discussion, but were closely involved in the planning and implementation of the activity. The coordinator, teachers and creative professional structured these meetings before and after each session to set out their respective goals and strategies. This again raises the issue of the distinctions between planning and plans set out above. The complexity of the activity could not be formalised so easily, nor set out in a structured plan. The plan, in this instance, merely provided a framework, or set out the 'terms of engagement'.

In another partnership, during an activity that could be located under drama, the teacher was encouraged by the creative professional to let pupils make mistakes. The pupils were encouraged to develop the play and design the set, costumes, etc. Their drama teacher was concerned with the quality of the performance, encouraging the pupils do things 'properly'. The creative professional was keen to let the pupils find out the practical implications of the decisions they were making. He used the school space differently and pupils found out that their costumes were uncomfortable by acting in them:

> [CP] *would turn up and he would be there doing stuff with them. At the same time, they would be out on the landing, doing little plays they had created and just using the space out there. Discovering that they couldn't move in the costume they had made, coming back in here and going 'I can't move', you know, and then fiddling around with it* (coordinator).

The teacher changed his approach to the activity in order to accommodate this approach. The creative teaching methods were therefore developed in practice, as the teacher loosened his grip on the process. The concern with the quality of performance remained, but it was addressed differently, by shifting responsibility towards the pupils.

4.2.5 The development of creativity in the learner in the activities mounted

During the implementation of creative activities, pupils were encouraged to contribute to it in ways that were structured around a series of objectives or pre-specified learning outcomes. Such outcomes were often related to a product, performance or artefact; some were accredited. The usual models of learning, such as 'talk and chalk', were disrupted; there was evidence of situational change, content change, process change, outcome change and

the suspension or relaxation of school norms or sanctions. These conditions for fostering the development of creativity in the learner are in themselves important and will be discussed first, before an analysis of the activities mounted.

4.2.6 Conditions conducive to the development of creativity in the learner

The conditions perceived to be conducive to developing creativity in the learner were drawn from an analysis of those strategies evident in partnership plans and planning that were outlined in 4.2.2 (above):

- situational change (moving the site of learning);
- content change (changing the learning activity so that it matched the perceived interests of the pupils);
- process change (encouraging more collaborative pupil participation in a learning activity);
- outcome change (suspending the formal curriculum and its related assessment methods); and
- the suspension of sanctions (permitting challenges to behaviour or school norms).

In one partnership, a group of pupils were making a film, an activity that required a degree of situational change. Their learning environment was altered in a number of ways. The school rules were relaxed to permit pupils to use the school as a backdrop for the film and they were allowed into those areas usually restricted to adults. Pupils were also able to leave the school and go into the city centre during lesson time, but in return they were expected to behave responsibly and to use the opportunity this provided to enhance the creative product.

Changing the content of a learning activity so that it matched the perceived interests of the pupils may have included situational change, but often also involved content change. In another partnership, the creative professionals changed content to match pupils' interests in order to engage them in songwriting:

> *We brought in a newspaper article and then they highlighted key phrases in it. Not necessarily taking the story line from the article, but taking the general idea. So it could be something – it could be a report about a football match – but the pupils would pick out key phrases that were really striking from that report, and then they would brainstorm everything they could think of concerned with football: about being a fan, about being a player, about the hooliganism, everything they could think of. So it would build up a huge bank of material, and then they would use the phrases and the inflection in your voice to give them an idea of the shape of the melody. And then they would tie that down to the music. So that's something we had never done before and it also gave very strong*

links to English, because there was a strong element of modern poetry with it, because it was all very, very expressive. The way that it was said then became the way that it was sung (teacher).

Changing the processes of learning, encouraging greater collaboration in a learning activity, was achieved by breaking down barriers posed by ability, or perceived ability. Pupils who were not considered to be able in a particular field were included and not provided with a route out of participation by previous failure. The research also found that suspending the formal curriculum and/or suspending school sanctions were commonly used, especially with pupils disaffected from learning. For example, pupils would be able to address the creative professional (and occasionally the teacher) by their names, rather than Sir or Miss. Other subject teachers would concede some degree of time, or curricular flexibility, to accommodate the activity if it did not exactly fit with the structure of the day.

4.2.7 Evidence of mounting activities to facilitate the development of creativity in the learner

Evidence of activities aimed at the development of creativity in the learner was found through the observations and through interviews with participants. However, unlike creative teaching, the 'arts location' of the activity (see Table 4.1 above) appeared to play a less important role. Many of the creative activities evident within partnerships encouraged risk-taking in an attempt to develop creativity in the learner. In one partnership, for example, where creative activities included live community broadcasts on the school radio station, pupils were expected to work under professional conditions. The school-based coordinator sought to construct learning situations in which pupils must make decisions under pressure and take risks:

Well, the biggest thing that sticks in my mind about the CAPE criteria is this word 'risk'. Because what we have in this environment is risk. They're meeting new situations all the time, live on air, with all the responsibilities that has with it. And the fact that we are prepared to trust them with that responsibility, I think, made them respect a lot and learn a lot. And it's made them want to be involved more, because of the success they've had (coordinator).

Other activities used similar strategies, that is, they placed the risk of securing a quality learning outcome on the pupil. Where this outcome was performance based, such as drama or dance, the pupils appeared to be motivated by the degree of risk.

Encouraging collaboration and collective learning was evident across a range of activities. In one partnership, for example, the creative professional collaborated with the music department to increase access to music. She established a salsa performance group of musicians and dancers, which broke down pupils' reluctance to participate in the existing school orchestra. This activity offered a range of routes into music by offering tuition in

percussion that appealed to pupils (because it required practice rather than prior expertise). In other partnerships, music was linked to pupils' contemporary experience through the use of rap artists, or by linking composition to recording and mixing. By drawing on creative professionals who were musicians with specific skills or interests in youth culture, CAPE activities encouraged participation in music.

Shifting the ownership of an activity featured in a range of activities. In art, for example, creative professionals encouraged the pupils to take greater responsibility for the quality of the learning outcome. There is evidence that creative professionals had to overcome an initial reluctance on the part of pupils, both to participate and to take art seriously. Artists used strategies that made the pupils collectively responsible for a learning outcome to overcome reluctance to participate, working as a group, rather than setting out a series of individual activities or setting out a series of activities that were drawn together as a final product, or for a final purpose.

Participants reported that drama developed pupils' confidence and self-esteem by offering a route from educational failure. A number of creative professionals referred to the ability of drama to deliver enhanced learning experience, often without the participants being fully aware of the benefits they have gained:

> *Well, what happens when you are working as we have worked in this* [activity] *is that it becomes sort of teaching by stealth – I suppose, in a way, learning without realising that you're learning. Because there's a lot going on and, on the face of it, a group of young people have put on a very exciting show and they think 'Aren't I clever? I could act this part', but there was so much more going on in the six to seven months we worked together. You could see people's attitudes changing. You could see their confidence growing. You could see them sharing ideas. You could see them working together – collaborating. You could see them giving and taking: all of that was happening – and in terms of having the confidence to speak out. So they were learning on many fronts without realising it. So, it was sort of teaching by stealth, but extremely effective* (creative professional).

This teaching by 'stealth' was particularly in evidence where activities focused on marginalised or disaffected young people. For example, in a number of partnerships (seven), particularly those typified as extensive, drama was used to bring marginalised young people into a mainstream environment. The most marginal or 'difficult' pupil may be given a role that places considerable pressure upon them so that that whole activity relies (to some extent) on their continued participation. Observational data from case-study sites showed that this strategy was meeting with some success: six pupils in one partnership returned to school after they had officially 'left' to complete an activity. In another partnership, pupils considered to be alienated from school came in during the school holidays to design costumes and rehearse for a performance.

The strategies to develop creativity that were apparent in partnership plans and in partnership planning may be seen as providing contexts for the attempts to develop creative teaching methods set out above. From the evidence we can rank the four main strategies by the frequency of their use across the initiative:

1. Encouraging risk-taking.
2. Encouraging collaboration or collective learning.
3. Shifting 'ownership' of an activity to pupils.
4. Using activities to develop pupils' confidence or self-esteem.

However, at most sites, in many activities, there was evidence of a combination of all four, with a degree of calibration taking place so that strategies were adopted according to contextual factors (such as the activity, pupils' age or ability, etc.).

4.2.8 Examining the relationship between the development of creative teaching methods and the development of creativity in the learner in: (a) the plans; and (b) the activities mounted.

The relationship between the development of creative teaching methods and the development of creativity in the learner in (a) plans and (b) activities mounted cannot be fully ascertained from the data. That is, we cannot identify a causal relationship between the two. What the data does allow us to do is to identify certain features of creative teaching and creative learning (in planning and implementation) and identify certain *factors* that are implicated in the relationship between creative teaching and creative learning.

Some partnerships had struggled to come to terms with creative teaching as both a concept and an activity. This was evidenced by the lack of specific references to creative teaching methods in documents, an unwillingness to discuss or elaborate on the issue during interview, and a general sense of tension around it. What was evident was the recognition that existing teaching methods are seen as somewhat inappropriate, or inappropriate, for some pupils, some of the time. The evidence from participants, specifically coordinators, suggested that it was often on the margins of provision that the need for new approaches manifested itself: in relation to specific groups. Where the majority of teachers were willing to experiment and reported positive developments through participation, a minority resented the application of a deficit model on their professional practice, the assumption that they are not creative professionals.

Pinning down the relationship between creative teaching and creative learning is therefore outside the scope of this current evaluation. We were able to draw on evidence to suggest that creative learning was evident in partnership plans, planning and activities mounted. The development of

creative teaching methods was not evident in plans, but was evident in planning and activities mounted. The relationship between the two appeared to be influenced by the nature of teaching and the desire to provide pupils with learning activities that engaged them. Greater experimentation was associated with extensive partnerships, and this in part appeared to rest on the importance of the relationship between coordinator, teacher, pupil and creative professional.

4.3 The extent and effectiveness of implementation

One of the objectives of the evaluation (the second to be addressed in this chapter) was:

(iii) to ascertain the extent and effectiveness of the implementation of plans.

This objective contained within it four sub-questions to be addressed through the evaluation:

1. Where and under what conditions are plans successfully implemented?
2. What changes and developments have they thus far brought about?
3. Is there symmetry between partnership plans and their implementation in creative educational activities?
4. What issues, pertinent to the implementation of partnership plans, are generalisable across sites?

4.3.1 Conditions of successful implementation

The implementation of plans was a major stage in the development of CAPE partnerships, and implementation followed an extended period of consultation between the various partners. There was a deliberate and careful strategy to postpone implementation, so that partnerships were clear in their objectives.

For analytical purposes, our evaluation of the implementation of plans was divided up into five areas:

- the transition between planning and implementation;
- the target population for creative activities;
- the providers of creative activities;
- the sustainability or embedding of activities; and
- the departmental or curricular location of activities.

The conditions under which implementation took place varied considerably and were affected by events such as a major fire at one secondary school, relocation at another, staff turnover, illness, etc. The purpose of this section will therefore be to hold in abeyance some of these external influences and focus instead on implementation as it has been experienced.

4.3.2 The transition between planning and implementation

Implementation strategies varied across the initiative. In some partnerships, the strategy was to go for a 'big bang', a one-off event that would raise the profile of the initiative within the schools and the community. Other partnerships chose to build slowly from a single small activity, hoping to engage the schools and community more gradually. Regardless of approach, communication was one of the major difficulties:

> *There isn't the same emphasis on making sure the information gets to the right person. If I sent a letter to, say, if we were dealing with Yorkshire water, if I sent a letter to somebody, I would have no qualms about it reaching them, whereas in a school I will. There's no sort of sense of information being graded in terms of importance, that sort of thing. Terrible difficulties getting through to anyone on the phone. Having to deal with stuff at home at night. Faxing doesn't work because people say 'Well, a fax doesn't get to me for four days', sort of thing. The use of, sort of, practical things, I have learnt a lot about. And it means, and the assumption is the only way things can work, is if I come up* [to the school] *now* (creative professional).

The nature of implementation was not linear. Instead, the pattern was of planning followed by partial implementation, followed by evaluation, further planning and then further implementation. This 'action research' approach provided an opportunity for those involved to take stock and restate their objectives at each stage. One partnership sought to break down professional boundaries and engaged the pupils early in implementation. They used residential opportunities with a carefully targeted group, taking the group away from the partnership setting in order to address some of the mistrust and anti-school sentiments within it. In another partnership, the opposite was the case, with a large festival involving a small group of marginalised pupils in a very public activity. Here, the concern was to raise the self-esteem and status of this group through their participation in a high-status community event. The difference between the two approaches is that where one acted with a sub-group away from the overall population, the other acted with a sub-group in view of the overall population. The effects were similar, but a different emphasis in the transition to implementation can be seen.

There was evidence that, under certain conditions, plans were not implemented. In one constrained partnership, implementation 'didn't work' because the partnership was not fully formed prior to the activities commencing. There existed a degree of uncertainty on the part of those

involved concerning their role in the initiative and their relationship with other partners. This is not to suggest that there was a failure to implement creative activities in this partnership, but that those activities that were implemented were less successful than the participants would have hoped.

4.3.3 The target population for creative activities

One issue related to the conditions under which plans are successfully implemented is targeting, specifically the impact of the European Social Fund (ESF). This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5. The original CAPE UK initiative was perceived by those participating in it to be aimed at pupils across the different phases of education: aged 5–16. Following the receipt of ESF funds, there was a *perception* that the axis of the initiative tilted towards pupils aged 15–16. However, the evidence was, that a range of pupils, with some bias towards pupils aged 15–16, took part in activities funded by ESF. Other pupils experienced creative activities through a very creative utilisation of ESF resources and by drawing on alternative resources (such as the Lottery and Granada). None the less, a *perceptual* shift took place in terms of the target population and this took place between planning and implementation.

4.3.4 The providers of creative opportunities

Creative activities were provided by teachers, creative professionals, school technicians, librarians, parents, students, governors, community workers and a range of others. During the transition from planning to implementation, a number of key creative professionals adopted a more proactive role and the concept of 'lead artist' emerged. This person's creative abilities were supplemented by a networking role, identifying and contacting suitable individuals or organisations to support the partnership. Of the 21 partnerships that took part in the evaluation, ten had a 'lead creative professional'; another ten relied on a range of creative professionals and teachers; and one appeared to rely solely on creative professionals for their creative input. Not all of the extensive partnerships (seven of the 21) had a lead creative in place, but all of the constrained partnerships (three of the 21) had no lead creative. In some partnerships, there was a 'needs must' approach, often revealing abilities *within* the partnership:

Interviewer: *Who has provided creative activities for pupils?*

Interviewee: *Mainly artists coming in, but the staff themselves as well, by working creatively, have provided massive opportunities also. We have found a lot of hidden talent.*

Interviewer: *Within your staff group?*

Interviewee: *Within the institution of the school, not necessarily all teachers. We have technicians who are fabulous potters, we have an excellent dancer, we have other people who are creative partners, but they are not necessarily teachers who work here. So that's exciting too* (coordinator).

Therefore, the existence of a 'lead' creative professional did not necessarily correspond to the successful implementation of plans, although it was clear that in partnerships of a constrained nature, their role could bring benefits to those who are 'struggling' with the initiative. Their value may be in the cohesiveness that they added to partnerships, providing stability and a longer-term focus for activities, not a precondition of implementation, but adding a degree of anchorage and steerage to implementation. As partnerships moved on from their first activities, there was evidence that the lead creative professional prevented fragmentation into a series of activities. This suggests that partnerships benefit from their presence; gaining stability and maintaining momentum.

4.3.5 The sustainability or embedding of creative activities

In the majority of partnerships, a series of activities was implemented, linked by a common theme or through a specific approach. For example, in one partnership there was a range of activities focusing on the use of space within the school. Within this overall focus were numerous activities that focused on physical space, the spaces pupils used within the school, the effect of architectural design on the creation of aural or visual space, the space the school occupied within its community, etc. A single activity within this overall theme could extend for a number of single lessons, days, weeks or even longer, but the main feature was their relationship to one another:

> *They* [the activities] *are enmeshed. They build from each other. They build on the strengths of each other. They are enmeshed. The outcomes of one* [lead] *on to the next one. And it's important that the kids see that* (creative professional).

Despite evidence of continuity, there was also evidence of freestanding and somewhat 'sporadic' activities and these primarily occurred in the three constrained partnerships. The tendency toward freestanding activity was probably related to partnership type, with the most embedded and sustained activities taking place in extensive partnerships.

4.3.6 The departmental or curricular location of activities

The evaluation examined a range of data concerning the curricular and departmental location of the initiative:

- the departmental or subject 'location' of the school-based coordinator;
- the 'type' or creative focus of creative professional engaged in the initiative;
- observations of creative educational activities;
- documentary evidence relating to activities; and
- participants' perceptions (based on interview data).

Based on these data, the research found that the initiative was tilted toward the arts, particularly through activities that involved the creation of an artefact or creative product, or led to a performance of some kind. Some of the early activities sought to consciously avoid the arts and there is evidence of the involvement of IT consultants, producers, designers, sports groups, and organisations or individuals who were not necessarily seen as 'artists'. Across the initiative as a whole, creative activities were implemented in all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, in the majority of partnerships, there was evidence of cooperation between the arts and other departments, with the coordinator often having an arts background (ten of the 23 coordinators interviewed taught art or arts-related subjects, such as drama) seeking out interested colleagues in other departments. As a consequence, where there was evidence of cross-curricular activity, this was of a nature that rested on the arts in some respect (such as relying on the provision of creative input from the arts or an artist into a subject area perceived to be 'less' creative than the arts), and, therefore, this was defined as 'limited' cross-curricular implementation. Where there was evidence of cross-curricular activity that did not rest on the arts base or on a creative professional associated clearly with the arts, then this was defined as 'broad' cross-curricular implementation. Where there was no evidence of extension beyond the arts, implementation was defined as resting within them. In summary, therefore, we can suggest three forms:

- **cross-curricular (broad)**: where the partnership had implemented creative activities across a wide range of subjects, extending beyond core National Curriculum subjects;
- **cross-curricular (partial)**: where the partnership had implemented creative activities across a smaller range of subjects, although these were not necessarily limited to core National Curriculum subjects;[2] and
- **subjects associated with the arts**: where the partnership had implemented creative activities within three subjects or fewer, and where two of these subjects were art or arts-related.

Table 4.2 (below) illustrates the curricular location of creative activities at the partnership level.

Table 4.2 The curricular location of activities in partnerships

Location	Cross-curricular (broad)	Cross-curricular (partial)	Subjects associated with the arts (arts-based)
Partnerships	2	13	6

Source: *NFER Stage 2 evaluation*

[2] *These may include core National Curriculum subjects, such as English, maths and science, but do not by implication exclude other subjects. For example, a limited cross-curricular implementation could include English, science, art, history, PE and geography.*

While this analysis presents a general picture of the location of the initiative at the time of the evaluation, there are two related issues concerning the data. The first is the extent to which it may fail to convey 'movement' within and between the partnerships since the Stage 1 evaluation. The second is the extent to which it fails to convey the frequency with which cross-curricular activities are implemented within a partnership.

When we examined the issue of movement, the Stage 1 evaluation provided useful comparative data. For example, this earlier research found that participants' perceived creativity to extend across the whole curriculum in only two partnerships and these were identified as 'Type B'. When we examined implementation, whether creative activities were actually implemented across the curriculum (in a broad sense), we found two partnerships where this was evident. However, these were not the same two Type B partnerships. That is, where creativity was perceived to extend across the curriculum in two partnerships prior to implementation, the Stage 2 evaluation found that these particular partnerships did not implement across the curriculum; another two did. When we examined the data for other partnerships, we found a good deal of movement between planning and implementation. For example, in a partnership identified as 'Type C', where there were perceived to be 'pockets' of creativity in subjects outside the arts, but no perception of creativity extending across the curriculum, creative educational activities were implemented in a broad cross-curricular sense. Another partnership had moved in the opposite direction, implementing solely within the arts. Thus, across the initiative as a whole, we found evidence of quite complex shifts.

When the data for frequency are examined, they point to an overall cross-curricular dimension to the initiative, albeit limited. For example, where two partnerships had implemented creative educational activities across a wide range of subjects, extending beyond the arts and the core National Curriculum subjects, this form of implementation was infrequent. Greater frequency was found in implementation in subjects associated with the arts. This suggests that it may be in some ways problematic to view the location of the initiative too far beyond the arts at this stage.

Partnership type had a bearing on the curricular location of implementation, albeit in a limited way. The tendency was for the constrained partnerships to find it difficult to extend beyond an 'arts base', although such difficulties were not solely the preserve of the constrained partnerships. Overall, the initiative had extended beyond its 'arts' identity and had penetrated other areas of the curriculum, albeit in a partial way. The evidence of movement, where the location of implementation is compared with Stage 1 data, suggests that there was a capacity to extend beyond the arts within the initiative, but differential capacity within the individual partnerships. That is, that partnerships can implement beyond an arts base, but some do not.

4.3.7 Conditions conducive to implementation

To sum up the conditions under which plans were successfully implemented, our analysis raised the following issues:

1. **The transition between planning and implementation**
   Communication emerged as an essential feature of ensuring successful transition. Trust between partners was crucial to the building of professional relationships. Where communication was effective, there were signs that implementation was enhanced; where it was less effective, implementation was negatively affected.

2. **Targeting**
   The success of the application for ESF funding led to perceptual changes concerning the target population. While some partnerships coped adequately with this shift, others found it unsettling. Clear and coherent targeting of pupils assisted implementation.

3. **Providers**
   The role of lead creative in managing the provision of creative activities was a feature of successful implementation, but over-reliance on such an individual prevented the full utilisation of the creativity available within the partnership.

4. **Sustainability**
   Strong leadership and the support of the school SMT were a characteristic of sustained and embedded activity, evident in most partnerships.

5. **Curricular location**
   Activities have been implemented across all subjects and there was evidence that the initiative broke down existing departmental or subject barriers. In some partnerships, implementation was restricted to art and arts-related subjects. Implementation was enhanced when extended beyond this arts base.

4.4 Changes and developments

The second of our sub-questions concerns the changes and developments that the implementation of plans has brought about. On the basis of the available evidence, we can point to five major changes that accompany the implementation of creative activities:

- changes in teaching practice;
- changes in the teacher/pupil relationships;
- changes in the level of community involvement;
- changes across school departments (cross-curricular working); and
- changes in relationships between schools (cross-phase and within phase).

Partnership type had a bearing on the degree of change. For example, in extensive partnerships, there was evidence of change in many or all of the areas outlined above, whereas in constrained partnerships there was little evidence of change in many or all areas. Between the extremes of the two types and including many developing partnerships, the picture was less clear. Some partnerships reported significant changes in a single area (such as pupil–teacher relationships), whereas others reported limited changes in all areas. To examine the basis of these changes and developments, it will therefore be useful to examine each of the areas individually.

4.4.1 Changes in teaching practice

Changes in teaching practice were reported in eight of the 21 partnerships, specifically changes due to experience of implementation. In partnerships where such changes were reported, they were seen to have come about by reducing the 'insularity' of teaching as a professional activity:

> *I think it's opened people up. Because if you think about it, in a school environment, most people are in a school environment nearly all their time, so they don't know what's going on in the 'outside world'. So they can become incredibly insular. So I think, in some respects, it's broadened teachers' views* (coordinator).

Changes in teaching practice were less frequently reported in constrained partnerships and there was evidence that there was resistance to such change. In one such partnership, implementation was seen as challenging: bringing in 'outsiders' was something that went against the culture of the school. Therefore, the staff culture of the school *and* partnership type were implicated in the ability of the initiative to effect change. Where changes or developments were reported, it was often linked to the building of bridges between teachers and pupils, or between the school and the community (including primary feeders).

4.4.2 Changes in teacher–pupil relationship

Many participants, including pupils, reported that they perceived an impact on pupils' perceptions of teachers and on teachers' perceptions of pupils. Significant changes in teacher–pupil relationships were reported in six of the partnerships. Participation in creative activities often allowed pupils to 'shock' or surprise their teachers. This was evident across all pupil groups, but was more marked (and more remarked upon) within pupils considered to be disaffected form school or alienated within it:

> *There are a large group of students, who have had contact with the initiative, who have clearly been affected by what they've been involved in, their perception of working with people from outside, their perception of working with adults. Their belief in themselves, through what they have achieved, has been immense, and certain projects have created a vast amount of self-esteem in an otherwise disaffected group of students* (coordinator).

Disaffected young people were allowed a fresh start and an opportunity to engage in a creative learning exercise without all the baggage and accruements collected during their schooling defining what they could or could not do. In one partnership, for example, young men who were alienated within the school (and considered to be a threat to it) took part in dance. The activity served to provide evidence of their abilities (which were already recognised, valued and well rehearsed in the community), but also exposed the assumptions that often surround dance and gender within the pupil and teaching populations. However, few changes in teacher–pupil relationships were reported in constrained partnerships, or where there was a high degree of pupil–teacher conflict.

4.4.3 Changes in the level of community involvement

Although perceptions of change in the level of community involvement were only reported in a minority of partnerships (four of the total), they are included because of their potential significance in the geographical location of partnerships. Some of the partnerships serve economically disadvantaged areas and areas with a high degree of cultural diversity. While none of the partnerships could be seen as immune from the influences of familial or communal deprivation or unaware of the needs of minority populations within their community, some partnerships reported very strong developments in terms of the relationship between the school and the community:

> *The entire partnership, I think, has a focus on the actual community. It's the community that matters. From the youngsters in the primary school, right through to people who have problems in their early 20s and 30s, who haven't found employment. And it's where everyone maps into that particular lifestyle of these people in the community, and how we can actually support, how we can provide opportunities for them to move forward instead of standing still* (coordinator).

Where such developments were reported, there were indications that the creative professional and the creative activities became a cultural and communal 'resource'. The nature of the activity may be teaching biology creatively or dance, but the activities were linked through existing community networks to a range of potential partners. The relatively low level of reporting of change possibly reflects the difficulty some partnerships experienced in linking to their wider community. Hence, community development was possible through the implementation of plans, but occurred only where this was a local priority. Where the community was not engaged so specifically, these relationships did not flourish.

4.4.4 Changes across school departments (cross-curricular working)

There was little association between the curricular location of the initiative (see 4.2 above) and reported change to cross-departmental working practices. Those reporting the greatest changes in cross-departmental or cross-

curricular practice were not located in partnerships where the initiative had extended beyond an 'arts base'. This suggests that regardless of curricular location, some partnerships were making progress where others were not. Moreover, because extension beyond the arts was identified with extensive partnerships, it may be the case that those who were the most 'arts based' were also making strides in addressing cross-curricular working practices, but from a different starting point.

4.4.5 Changes in relationships between schools (cross-phase and within phase)

The research found that the implementation of plans in some partnerships had led to perceived changes in the relationships between schools within and across the individual partnerships. Within the 21 partnerships, there was evidence of variable engagement with primary schools. In a number of cases (four), primary schools were 'partners' in name only. However, where primary partners were involved in implementation, there were signs that this enhanced the relationship between schools. Moreover, the clustered nature of many partnerships led to primary–primary links developing alongside the cross-phase links more commonly reported by participants. The data indicated that where carefully planned activities had been implemented that take cognisance of primary needs, then the links between phases were enhanced further. For example, one partnership implemented activities that broke down age-related working patterns and enhanced opportunities to work across sites prior to school transition. Another partnership used secondary pupils as mentors to engage primary pupils from a range of schools in creative activities. A number of partnerships had engaged in performances that took place across sites, or cut across age groups.

4.4.6 Summary

Overall, the implementation of plans precipitated changes and developments in a number of areas, including the five key ones identified above. Other reported changes were more fleeting in nature. For example, some participants maintained that implementation changed the perception of the arts within the schools. Teachers reported that their confidence had increased through working with creative professionals, and creative professionals contended that their perceptions (or misconceptions) of teachers and teaching had changed. However, while it may have made education 'fun again' for those involved, there is a sense in which such developments were not guaranteed. There was a perception that progress in education may be incremental and that the full impact of CAPE may as yet be unclear:

> *I wouldn't say it has sort of revolutionised the school, but I would say that has been a massive part of keeping the school thinking differently and doing things in a different manner. So, it has not been a revolution, but it has been a very important part of what goes on* (coordinator).

4.5 Symmetry between partnership plans and their implementation in creative educational opportunities

The third of our sub-questions concerns symmetry between partnership plans and the implementation of those plans in creative educational activities. The evidence points to different degrees of symmetry between partnership plans and their implementation in creative activities across sites, related to the following:

- over-elaboration or over-ambition;
- staffing issues (illness, turnover or unavailability);
- excessive rigidity or structure;
- the impact of the timetable and other school-based issues;
- the impact of tests or examinations;
- the compatibility of personnel; and
- poor management at the school or partnership level.

The first activities implemented were tied more closely to plans than later and more recent activities. For example, plans to form CAPE partnerships were followed by the implementation of activities that were reflected in those plans, albeit as aspirations in some cases and implemented in different forms in others. Although the dynamic and creative nature of the initiative led to a degree of 'necessary' flexibility, too much flexibility can lead to CAPE becoming identified as an 'income stream' rather than an initiative in its own right:

> *As long as there is a pot of cash that I can tick boxes for to get money out of somebody to do something for the kids, I couldn't care less which pot of cash it is. If the pot of cash it's been drawn from offers as few restrictions as possible, all the better* (coordinator).

Although the data do not suggest that this is the case at most of the 21 partnerships, on the margins of the initiative, where it is not embedded and perhaps 'struggling' to take hold, the lack of symmetry between plans and activities may undermine longer-term objectives.

4.6 Issues pertinent to the implementation of plans that are generalisable across sites

The fourth of our sub-question concerns those issues, pertinent to the implementation of plans, which may be generalisable across sites. The above analysis revealed ten issues. These are listed in order of their appearance in this chapter, rather than weighted by their potential significance.

- There is evidence that the development of creative teaching methods was considered in planning and in the implementation of plans.
- The development of creativity in the learner required a context in which pupils could take risks and engage in creative problem-solving in collaborative relationships with professionals and their peers. These contexts were created through the initiative, but require the support of the school management.
- Creative teaching and creative learning were evident in activities mounted across partnerships, but appeared to be contingent on the development of trust and where learning led to positive and mutually valued outcomes.
- Communication within a partnership and between a partnership and CAPE UK impacted on implementation.
- Targeting pupils effectively increased the scale and speed of implementation.
- The role of the lead creative and the CAPE coordinator was central in successful implementation.
- Creative activities were sustained and embedded in those partnerships where there was evidence of strong leadership and support of the SMT.
- Partnerships faced different issues when attempting to implement activities across subject or departmental boundaries. There was a relationship between partnership type and curricular location, with constrained partnerships struggling to escape an 'arts' identity.
- The successful implementation of partnership was perceived to have led to positive changes in teaching and learning, to changes in professional relationships and to greater community involvement in schools.
- There was a danger of 'slippage' in a minority of partnerships, where a lack of symmetry between activities and plans was evident.

4.7 Partnership approaches and implementation

In addition to our four sub-questions, there remains another question carried over from Chapter 2: are different partnership approaches more or less successful in the processes of implementation? We address this question here, so that it may be considered in the light of the preceding issues of planning and implementation.

4.7.1 The partnership approach

In some respects, the concept of a 'partnership approach' is problematic or, at least, it is unable to convey the complexity and ambiguity of implementation across the initiative. A more useful mode of analysis may be to examine implementation and partnership type, where the typologies identified in Chapter 2 are linked to the processes of implementation. To reiterate this typology, CAPE UK partnerships may be typified as ***extensive*** (seven partnerships); ***developing*** (11 partnerships); and ***constrained*** (three partnerships). In order to assess whether successful implementation is contingent on partnership type, the degree of contingency on type has been graded as high, medium or low on the strength of the various data. For example, where the evidence suggests a high degree of correspondence between the successful implementation of creative teaching methods and a partnership type, a 'score' of 3 (high) would be placed under that type. Should there be little or no correspondence between that aspect of implementation and partnership type, then a 'score' of 1 (low) would be placed under that type. Finally, a rating representing the overall average of implementation with partnership type was calculated. This represents the weight of evidence across all of the issues and will represent the degree to which a partnership type corresponds to evidence of successful implementation across all areas. A rating of 2.1 to 3.0 would suggest that a partnership type was relatively successful in all areas of implementation; in effect, that that type had a great deal of impact on successful implementation. A rating of 0 to 1.4 would suggest that a partnership type is associated with less successful implementation in most or all areas[3] (see Table 4.3).

The data displayed in the table convey a number of related aspects of implementation, for example that successful implementation is generally linked to extensive partnerships and less successful implementation is linked to restricted partnerships, but that there are some areas (such as the development of creativity in the learner in plans) that are not partnership contingent. None the less, extensive partnerships were as successful in all areas, and more successful in some areas, than all other types.

[3] *Although it should be noted that a partnership could conceivably attract a rating as low as 0.6 and still be relatively successful in one area.*

Table 4.3: Implementation and partnership type

Issues of implementation	Partnership type		
	Extensive	Developing	Constrained
1. The development of creative teaching methods in plans	2	2	1
2. The development of creativity in the learner in plans	2	2	2
3. The development of creative teaching methods in activities mounted	3	2	1
4. The development of creativity in the learner in activities mounted	3	2	1
5. Symmetry between plans and activities	2	1	1
Overall average	2.4	1.8	1.2

5. CREATIVITY AND PUPILS TARGETED UNDER THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine the influence on the initiative of funds provided by the European Social Fund (ESF) under their Youthstart programme. CAPE UK was successful in its applications for Youthstart funding, and as a consequence ESF-funded activities form a distinct feature of the CAPE partnerships. In addition, CAPE UK has entered into partnerships with providers of post-16 education in Leeds and Manchester. Two sites offering post-compulsory education (one in each city) took part in the evaluation, and they provided important evidence of the influence of ESF funding on the experiences of disadvantaged or marginalised young people. In many respects, CAPE UK broke new ground with Youthstart funding, an income source not usually available for those within compulsory education. One of the conditions placed on CAPE (following negotiation with the DfEE) was that 50 per cent of all activities funded had to take place outside school time.

One of the objectives of the evaluation was:

> **(v) to assess the extent to which CAPE principles have influenced programmes of learning with the ESF target group, namely those who are disadvantaged within the current system.**

Within this overall objective were four sub-questions:

1. What impact has the initiative had upon the learning *experience* of disadvantaged or marginalised groups?

2. How have creative activities, or creativity, changed existing patterns or programmes of learning with the ESF target groups?

3. Have out-of-school creative activities organised as part of the Youthstart programme successfully engaged with and motivated disaffected young people?

4. What strategies are partnerships adopting to ensure CAPE principles inform the programmes of learning focused on ESF target groups?

The first two of these sub-questions will be answered together by providing evidence of the impact of the initiative on young people and how the initiative has changed existing patterns of learning with such groups. The third sub-question will be addressed by looking beyond the experiences of disadvantaged or marginalised young people in schools to the post-16 partnerships. The final section will assess the extent to which programmes of learning are informed by CAPE principles.

5.2 Examining the impact of the initiative on the learning experience of disadvantaged or marginalised groups

The research found that in most partnerships, CAPE activities were perceived to have had a significant impact on the learning experiences of disadvantaged or marginalised young people and that this influence was considered to be overwhelmingly positive. Proximity to implementation influenced perceptions of impact, with coordinators, pupils and creative professionals tending to focus on the experience of the intervention, and heads and members of the SMT expressing more concern about how impact was measured or sustained over the longer term. This section addresses the main features of the impact of ESF, examining how students were targeted and what their experiences were.

5.2.1 Targeting the pupils

In terms of ESF funded activities, targeting took three broad forms:

- Blanket targeting: where the entire pupil population was chosen.
- Selective targeting by deprivation: where a sub-group of the pupil population was chosen based on an assessment of their degree of marginalisation or deprivation in relation to the overall pupil population.
- Selective targeting by other criteria: where a sub-group of the pupil population was chosen based on an assessment of the potential engagement in relation to the pupil population, or in relation to another sub-group of it.

Partnerships did not target the same young people to take part in activities under ESF. One of the key targeting criteria (disadvantage) was interpreted differently. In some partnerships, assessment was based on eligibility for free school meals; whereas in others it was based on home circumstances or on parental unemployment. In some partnerships, because of the 'out-of-school' dimension to ESF, volunteers were sought. Disaffection, rather than disadvantage was one of the criteria used, with one partnership making a distinction between those who could be usefully engaged and those whose disaffection was almost total:

> *Now it would be possible to think that another level or another group could benefit, and CAPE may be able to provide that kind of work. But what we did was to try and target the ones that were above the really, really disaffected, and see if we could use CAPE as a way of actually keeping them motivated and sustaining them. And I think in some ways that has happened* (coordinator).

Another partnership chose to engage this most disaffected group, including the most difficult and disruptive pupils. Other partnerships focused activities specifically on highly economically disadvantaged subgroups. In one partnership, the target population was pupils most marginalised within the school and the local community – the children of recently arrived asylum seekers. The rationale for this focus was to overcome the pressing need to raise the status of such children within the school and to raise their levels of self-confidence:

> *A particular example – two boys had recently arrived from Somalia. They were very quiet and had apprehensions; they were almost scared. But they made a major contribution to this festival. And because of their contribution, their image was raised. Their esteem was raised in the eyes of others; so that they appreciated them and valued them. They set an example; others like them, newcomers to the school, who hadn't participated in those activities but saw them, also gained confidence* (coordinator).

Youthstart activities were therefore used as a means of reducing social exclusion within the partnership. In this case, targeting was made quite easy by the presence of a highly disadvantaged and quite obviously marginalised sub-group. In one partnership, the targeting was similarly on highly disadvantaged pupils, but had to take account of high levels of social disadvantage across the entire pupil population. It was not possible to identify a single sub-group within the school as more disadvantaged than any other group:

> *I haven't singled out groups within this school as being disadvantaged because if the kids are in this school then they are disadvantaged. You know, there are very few kids that do not come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The school is in one of the top ten disadvantaged wards in the United Kingdom, so, you know, I don't single them out or identify them* (coordinator).

Most partnerships adopted a range of targeting strategies. For one activity, a blanket approach may be adopted; for another, the selection of a subgroup. Whatever method was used, ESF did bring some difficulties to partnerships, particularly in terms of introducing participants to the intricacies of matched funding, of accreditation and careful targeting policies. And although in many instances the partnerships were able to creatively interpret ESF criteria, it formed a powerful centralising force in an initiative grounded on delegation and experimentation. However, most partnerships (including all extensive partnerships and many developing partnerships) have ensured that resources provided by the ESF have had a significant impact on the

experiences of disadvantaged or marginalised groups. Where they have not (in all of the constrained partnerships and a minority of the developing partnerships), the evidence suggests that it was the lack of capacity to engage creatively with the criteria:

> *The problem with ESF, I think, within our school, was that it wasn't dealt with very imaginatively. There are lots of problems to do with – what's the word? – matched funding, and things like that, and it wasn't dealt with. I think it's been done quite creatively in some schools to cover that and it wasn't here. It was just seen as a massive problem* (coordinator).

The 'problem' of ESF was not therefore within the structure of ESF, but the interpretation of that structure at the partnership level. Where ESF was used successfully, its impact was discerned in four key areas:

- increasing pupils' engagement in learning (overcoming pupil disaffection);
- retention in educational settings (preventing or reducing drop-out);
- rejoining pupils with their educational 'careers' (overcoming fractures in pupils' progress); and
- altering aspirational trajectories (providing pupils with new opportunities).

In order that we may examine the experience of disadvantaged or marginalised groups, we will address the impact in each area.

5.2.2 Increasing pupils' engagement in learning (overcoming pupil disaffection)

The research found that activities funded by the ESF Youthstart programme in most partnerships were perceived to be successful in engaging or re-engaging pupils in learning: they addressed or overcame pupil disaffection. According to participants, working with teachers and creative professionals in new ways offered disaffected pupils a chance to escape their identity as 'difficult' or disruptive, often a debilitating self-identity:

> *I think, with disaffected groups there is an awful lot of feeling that, which in this school certainly is not from the staff, but from the students, that they are sort of a marginalised group, or perhaps that they are, not ..., people don't like them. Or that they are a low-ability group and proud of it because of – they kind of liked to be disliked: the infamous ones. And I think they actually, when you take time to actually do something different with them and involve somebody from outside the school, which shows a certain degree of commitment, I think, that in itself, is very empowering for them. And then, when it actually works well, when it is good-quality stuff and it actually does involve them thinking and being creative themselves, then it makes it all the better basically* (coordinator).

Within many ESF activities, disaffected pupils were given 'new' identities by adults who had not met them before. As was the case with creative activities implemented within the initiative overall, classroom norms were relaxed, particularly when the activity took place after school and voluntary attendance was required:

> *I think we have found, well people often remark that the young people who stay behind after school to be involved in the activity are almost, ... more than 60 to 70 per cent of them are the kids that are not really cooperative in class. And part of it is that they feel able to be really creative in an environment where they are not having to fight authority, where there isn't this authority battle going on, where they immediately shut down all they have to give. Suddenly, they are in an environment where they haven't got to play that game and they loosen up. And then they have got enormous resources to give* (creative professional).

Part of this process of identity renegotiation revolved around giving 'voice' to disaffected pupils or taking their views more seriously:

> *It does make you think 'Well these are actually quite good students. How come I am like I am with them?'* [A boy] *was involved in two years of projects, he's just so much more vocal now. He didn't have a voice. He never even dare, even think, that he was being asked. So, that's really improved. They like working with professionals, they like different people coming in* (coordinator).

The creative professional formed a valuable resource within several partnerships. Teachers valued their ability to stand outside existing practice and develop new strategies to engage disaffected young people. Creative professionals were generally familiar with ambiguity and may have educational and occupational trajectories that lent themselves to developing strategies that overcome pupil disaffection:

> *Well, I guess, like most artists, you can trace things back to your childhood. I was in special educational units from the age of nine through to 16 and I was severely dyslexic. I have to be specific about that and say severely dyslexic. Severely dyslexic means that after seven years of specialist education, I still could not read or write when I was 16, not to a competent level. And the reason for that was because I wasn't given any motivation whatsoever. All I was given was systems by which I could learn to read and write, but of course, systems don't encourage people, other people encourage people. So I am very aware of the effect that personalities have and that different attitudes have. So I absolutely loathed, hated school, with a vengeance* (creative professional).

However, creative professionals must walk a difficult line in case their activities challenged the status quo and alienated the teachers they worked with, or on whose support they relied. In one partnership, for example, the pupils were so engaged in a creative activity that they wanted to carry on into the lunch break when the lesson ended. They continued to work in the

classroom, albeit unsupervised, and the coordinator was later reprimanded by the SMT for '*leaving children alone with a pair of scissors*'. While such a response reflects normal school procedure and displays a concern with health and safety, the creative professional simply found it infuriating:

> *And for me it's like 'Take the bloody risk!' If the kids want to work through lunchtime and this is about creativity and learning and everything, then this should be seen as a major achievement, but it's seen as a problem* (creative professional).

The ability of a core of teachers and creative professionals to work collaboratively with pupils and achieve high levels of engagement takes place in a context where such strategies may create a degree of conflict within the school.

5.2.3 Retention in educational settings (preventing or reducing drop-out)

Youthstart activities were implicated in the retention of pupils in educational settings and in reducing the rates at which pupils turn their backs on schooling. Several interviewees suggested that pupils on the verge of exclusion, contemplating dropping out, or leaving prior to or during exams, were retained in educational settings through creative activities:

> *The kids would have gone otherwise and that's it. They wouldn't have come back. There are kids accompanying me over the last fortnight into primary schools, doing drama workshops, who otherwise would have just been sitting around doing nothing. So it's kept them in and what interests me, you know, it keeps on bubbling around this idea of kids in Year 11 that have left, no longer leaving, no longer just going off onto the jobs market, still on the books, still expecting to attend, even when they have finished their exams* (coordinator).

According to participants, the engaging capacity of creative activities provides a rationale for continued attendance. Pupils attended school during holidays and when their peers had left in order to see a project to its conclusion, or to take part in a public performance. The creative activities may override the compulsory dimension of schooling. In altering existing teaching and learning transactions, where the pupil can be viewed as a somewhat passive recipient of knowledge, the activities shift responsibility on to the pupil; they required greater commitment on the part of the pupil. The pupil's own investment in the activity was often high (or high in comparison to their investment in a standard series of lessons), and this may lead to a greater willingness to attend school when such an activity is taking place.

Evidence from interviews with students showed that the creative product of an activity was highly valued within the peer group and perhaps the wider community. Pupils who had taken part in a performance reported that they gained peer group, familial and communal status from it, and this

was particularly true in the case of activities such as 'Rock Challenge' (a dance competition where pupils compete with other schools in front of large audiences). The role of the pupils in the activity (as active producers of it), and the status of the activity within the pupil population, meant that it was not uncommon for pupils on the very margins of retention to attend lunchtime, after-school, weekend and holiday rehearsals.

The evidence suggested that where Youthstart activities involved high production standards (of an artefact or performance), then retention was frequently enhanced. However, where the product was perceived to be of a lower standard or lacked peer group, familial or communal status, then retention was less frequently enhanced. This was evident in an after-school activity in one partnership where a degree of 'drift' had taken place and the product was being completed by creative professionals, teachers and a small core of remaining pupils.

5.2.4 Rejoining pupils with their educational 'careers' (overcoming fractures in pupils' progress)

Some of the partnerships used Youthstart activities to assist pupils in the transitions between sites or stages of provision. It bears mention that although ESF beneficiaries were of secondary school age, the activities they engaged in could extend outwards. In one partnership, for example, the ESF beneficiaries were at the heart of a community radio initiative that embraced pupils from across the secondary school in which the radio station was based, engaged pupils from primary partners, and involved business partners, a range of professionals and creative professionals and the local community. Pupils from a cluster of schools were involved in providing material for broadcasts and in the broadcasts themselves. The ESF criteria were met, but the benefits of the activity were more widespread and linked to local priorities.

Other ESF activities were deemed by participants to have helped overcome fractures in pupils' educational careers by engaging pupils who had been excluded from school (or who risked exclusion) or involving pupils with medical problems or educational difficulties. In one partnership, for example, several pupils whose educational career had been interrupted by illness were re-engaged through Youthstart because the activities were a 'fresh start' for all participants. These activities were able to ignore previous absence because all participants began from the same point. In another partnership, pupils who had been excluded from one school (or more than one in some cases) were given an opportunity to participate with pupils in their 'new' school on equal terms, bringing their abilities to bear on the activity (dance). Some of the Youthstart activities also exposed abilities that may not have been evident in more formal contexts of teaching and learning. So, for example, a pupil who was new to the school (such as a recently arrived refugee) may have had few outlets to provide evidence of ability in the formal curriculum because of linguistic difficulties, but may be extremely able in other areas (such as gospel singing, drama, dance, fine art, graffiti art, poetry, as a DJ, etc.). Youthstart activities 'tapped into' a range of culturally specific and, to some extent, 'hidden' talents within the

pupil population. Because some of the activities focused on abilities that were less visible in more formal teaching and learning situations, parents, community workers and a range of associated participants could then be drawn upon to ease transitions, to overcome barriers and fractures to children's progress. By ignoring past transgressions of school norms or absence from the school setting, Youthstart activities offered an arena to which pupils could bring their creative potential.

5.2.5 Altering aspirational trajectories (providing pupils with new opportunities)

Data collected from pupils and their teachers suggested that leaving school with few qualifications did not necessarily have negative occupational consequences. In cities, for example, students and teachers reported that it was still possible to earn relatively high wages, and the availability of well-paid work exerted a degree of 'pull' from any alternative routes, such as further or higher education. In addition, there was the influence of the community beyond the school: in some instances, participants perceived that educational credentials did not have a very high social or community value. There was some evidence that Youthstart activities had to some extent confronted these alternative values and non-educational expectations, and provided young people with alternative routes from school. For example, in one partnership, arrangements were made for pupils to gain help in creating portfolios of work to present to admissions tutors at a local arts college. In another partnership, pupils were offered insights into the creative industries through links with a range of professionals associated with music, ICT and multimedia. While there was no evidence that such routes were formal or provided mentors or job opportunities, their engagement in creative educational opportunities brought pupils into contact with alternative, often highly paid post-school options.

In a number of partnerships (five), the most 'school-resistant' sub-group of the pupil population were engaged in Youthstart activities. In one partnership, for example, there was essentially a 'CAPE cohort', a small group of pupils who had been heavily exposed to creative activities in an attempt to address their disaffection with school and their perceived unstable and deprived familial backgrounds:

> *I would say that 99 per cent of our youngsters don't have a 'normal' family background, where you have a stable family unit. And there are some other social issues thrown in with that as well, drug abuse, not on a massive scale, but it certainly happens in the area. There's nothing for the youngsters to do outside school, outside of their own peculiar or particular interest. Income in the area is poor, employment is low and it typifies what I now know as Leeds as a 'twin-track' city. We have a lot of development, a lot of wealth, we have a lot of very good things around the city. The city has developed over the past 25 years, but this area has suffered, for whatever reason. I don't know why, I'm not a social anthropologist. But getting to know the youngsters, getting to know the area – a tremendous amount of deprivation – so education and this school has a role in addressing that – a big role in that* (coordinator).

This group experienced a range of activities that were based on a perception of their marginal status within the school and wider community. The ESF funding allowed the partnership to work with the community and primary partners in tackling some of the issues children and young people faced in this area. Creative activities had focused on increasing mobility and building confidence within the community, as well as meeting educational objectives.

Beyond the school-based partnerships (post-16), evidence from students suggested that the alternatives offered through Youthstart were more successful in altering the aspirations of young people who have few opportunities, or who were uncertain of their post-school future. It may be that post-16 provides a more useful arena in which to examine the claims made on behalf of Youthstart (see 5.3). In school-based partnerships, there was more evidence of a desire to influence pupils' aspirations than there was of Youthstart's capacity to do so. This may be linked to the social inclusion agenda of the funding source. The pupils themselves reported an impact on their future plans based on participation, but this impact has to be considered in the light of the small number of students engaged at some sites.

5.2.6 Some concerns within the provision of Youthstart activities

In both school-based and post-16 contexts, there were some concerns that ESF activities had some negative impacts, and these fell within four main areas:

- the targeting of participants;
- issues of repetition;
- the experiences of vulnerable young people; and
- sustainability of impact.

Within some partnerships, a very small core of pupils had been the focus of ESF-funded activities. In some instances, this had led to a degree of resentment on the part of those pupils who had not been selected. Moreover, although the basis for the selection may have been 'disadvantage', the pupil population may have seen the activity as a reward for poor behaviour or a lack of engagement:

> *But if you are suddenly choosing, you use the word disadvantaged, you know, you do get the backlash from other students: 'Well why are they getting to do this project when we have been working really hard?'* (coordinator).

The focus on a small group meant that a select and limited sub-sample of students were given an enriched experience, but those creative experiences and opportunities were then restricted within the school to that core group:

> *It's difficult, because it's not really a big school and you could be using the same children for about three or four activities. And the*

class teacher will get very annoyed because the children are being taken out of the classroom, and that throws up a lot of problems (coordinator).

The target group in one partnership contained some quite marginal and vulnerable young people, and teachers interviewed were concerned that such students may not benefit from too great an exposure to the risk-taking and ambiguity involved in the activity (performance). While the risks of exposing vulnerable young people to uncertainty and the effects of targeting disadvantaged pupils at the expense of the wider pupil population were recognised at the partnership level, of equal concern was the lasting impact these activities had on participants. The evaluation found evidence that pupils enjoyed the activities currently taking place, but there was also evidence of confusion over activities that had ended. Some of the pupils who had experienced quite intensive intervention were concerned that they would be just 'left behind' when these activities stopped, or another group was targeted. In post-16, concern was expressed about the degree to which students would drift back into low expectations after the course had ended.

5.3 Youthstart, out-of-school activities and the engagement of disaffected young people in post-compulsory education

In addition to the 21 partnership sites centred on secondary school clusters, a number of post-16 providers have also been involved in CAPE activities. A summary of the analysis of data from this part of the evaluation is presented separately in order to focus on its key features. Although it shares similarities with the issues raised from the analysis of data from school-based partnerships, it may be useful to examine the evidence from these sites separately.

5.3.1 Sites of provision

The two sites (one in Leeds and one in Manchester) were very different in terms of their structure, their overall educational role and their relationship to CAPE UK. For example, in Leeds, CAPE delivered creative activities as training providers and in Manchester, CAPE provided funding for creative activities through a college programme. In Leeds, the premises were identified specifically for the delivery of creative activities (based in a community and adult education centre), whereas in Manchester, these activities enhanced existing provision (based in the arts department at a college of further education). While they were linked to accreditation in Manchester, the students' progression to work and/or further study was the overriding priority in Leeds. Moreover, the students were taking part in CAPE-related activities for different reasons. In Leeds, provision was based on collaboration between CAPE UK, the Careers Service and Leeds TEC, to provide educational experiences for very marginalised young people, whereas in Manchester, the student group was less marginalised. These

distinctions are important because from the analysis of the data, we can see that delivering opportunities was achieved in Leeds, whereas funding creative activities in Manchester led to them being subsumed (and to some extent lost) within a much broader educational and training agenda.

The route into provision was different for each group. In Manchester, students were directed to the course by careers, or other guidance workers, but once they reached the college, admission was through central admissions system. In Leeds, students were identified by one of a number of personal advisers linked to the careers service, some working in an outreach capacity:

> *I have young people either referred to me by other members of staff here, or they're people I actually pick up out in the community setting: young people who are, in one way or another, not ready to join mainstream education or training, or take a work option. It might be that they have dropped out of school early or they have got any kind of problem. It might be homelessness or drug-related, crime related; it can sometimes just be a lack of confidence, self-esteem, that kind of thing. On the Learning Gateway, we work with them intensively on what we call the 'front end', giving them any help they need, referring them to other organisations when it's something that we can't deal with* (careers officer).

Therefore, in Leeds at least, activities were implemented with these quite marginal and vulnerable students as the focal point: they were planned around that group, whereas in Manchester, students were directed to the activities by their course tutor, once they had enrolled on an arts course. Regardless of route into the activity and the role of CAPE as funder or provider, the perceived impact of creative activities on students was similar (if not greater) than that for activities taking place within the 21 school-based partnerships.

5.3.2 Retention in educational settings (preventing or reducing drop-out)

Students in post-16 education are not compelled by law to attend, although students would not receive some benefits or allowances if they left their course. None of those students who took part in the evaluation identified fiscal reasons for presence, although students talked freely about the fiscal pressures they were under. It is therefore possible to suggest that the reasons for attendance were not purely fiscal and were linked to the experience of provision. Rates of attendance varied within and between sites and while it was difficult to compare data, by comparing students' average attendance for one three-week block, we may obtain a degree of accuracy that is adequate for our purpose. The average attendance for a similar period of activity was 53 per cent in Manchester and 63 per cent in Leeds. When this figure is examined on the basis of individual students, there is a pattern, in that individual students were often responsible for the majority of absenteeism. Absenteeism may be linked to a range of factors, such as illness or familial responsibility. In Leeds, it was influenced by students'

fragmented backgrounds, housing difficulties, drug use and continued offending behaviours. In light of the differences between student populations (Manchester students having more stable home circumstances and more stable educational backgrounds), it would be possible to argue that provision in Leeds retained students more effectively than did that in Manchester. However, the absence of accurately comparable data makes such an assertion risky (e.g. it may be influenced by the timing and nature of the curriculum content). It may be more accurate to suggest simply that given the nature of the student population in Leeds, the attendance data suggests that this provision retained some young people in educational settings.

5.3.3 Increasing students' engagement in learning (overcoming pupil disaffection)

Creative activities provided for students in FE partnerships exhibited similar features to those identified in compulsory education, perhaps more so, given the 'out-of-school' nature of provision. They were perceived to have successfully engaged and motivated young people using similar strategies:

- by allowing students to escape their disaffected identities;
- by redefining the norms of teaching and learning;
- by giving voice to young people and taking their views seriously;
- by encouraging risk-taking; and
- by demanding high standards in students' performance or production.

Most of those engaged in creative activities could be defined as marginalised young people, whether or not directed to provision by outreach workers or other advisers. An important part of the provision and of programmes of learning was a 'levelling' of previous failure and a concern with students' potential. This required the students to desist from confrontational positioning towards the providers of activities. Students were not able to position the providers as authority figures within teaching and learning relationships that were more equal and, to some degree, ignored the past. Activities therefore required a relaxation of programmes of learning that were based on the concept of students as recipients of the creative professional's input and were redesigned around a model where the creative professional acts as facilitator, encouraging students to explore their own creative abilities. The students interviewed felt that this redefinition of their role as learners was positive and, for many, it was a welcome relief from previous school experiences:

Interviewer: *Is teaching here different to that at your old school?*

Interviewee: *Yes, totally different. You get treated a lot better and that, you know what I mean? School have got no respect for you – I don't know – it's just totally different, their attitude and that. They don't speak down to you and boss you around. You don't want that, do you? Like when you were at school* (student).

In post-16 provision, the norms of teaching and learning were open to greater redefinition around the activity. In Manchester, this was less pronounced than it was in Leeds. The sites of provision made certain demands on participants. Where students in the Manchester partnership had access to many resources on site, students in Leeds left the site and sought those resources in the community. This allowed much greater flexibility in the design of programmes of learning. For example, students in Leeds could use professional recording studios, film-making and editing facilities, and professional theatre and dance facilities, and access a range of arts and educational sites. The different sites of provision both permitted and restricted the implementation of specific programmes of learning. In Manchester, a 'resource-rich' site, the students left site less frequently, and teaching and learning were more in line with existing patterns and norms. In Leeds, a 'resource-poor' site, the students left site often, and teaching and learning were structured around the programme goals, needs and abilities of the students and expertise of the creative professionals.

A range of creative professionals forms a resource within the partnership. Activities were related to the skills these professionals brought with them, and were of a group nature. This meant that in most instances, the student was placed in a role where the success or failure of any single activity was contingent on their contribution to it. This required that they at least attempted to take part in things that perhaps would, on the basis of their previous experience, appear outside their interests or abilities.

A consequence of the more 'transitionary' nature of provision in Leeds was that the professional standard of production was enhanced through the involvement of, or reference to, 'outside' agencies or professionals. For example, students made masks for a street festival, and the public nature of the festival and its high community status appeared to have enhanced the value of the activity in the eyes of the participants. Taken together, data from both sites suggested that student engagement was increased through the production of 'quality' outcomes and engagement in creative activities that offered them a route from previous failure.

5.3.4 Rejoining students with their educational 'careers' (overcoming fractures in students' progress)

The form of provision within each of the post-16 sites was linked to students' progression, but from different starting points. In Manchester, the students enrolled on a 'General Art and Design' (GAD) course; in Leeds, on a 'Learning Gateway'. The requirement for entry for each option differed. In Manchester, students were expected to have some prior experience of art and design and an interest in studying art and design, although they were not necessarily required to possess any formal qualification (such as a GCSE). In Leeds, the students were expected to have an interest in art and media, but their educational backgrounds were less relevant. For example, some of the students had low levels of literacy and numeracy. In Leeds, provision attempted to rejoin students with learning, whereas in Manchester, provision created a 'bridge' to further study.

Evidence from both sites points to some success in rejoining students with their educational careers. However, because the provision in Leeds had a greater distance to bridge, the Leeds partnership appears particularly instrumental in this respect – though this should not detract from the achievements of the Manchester partnership.

5.3.5 Altering aspirational trajectories (providing students with new opportunities)

The evidence from both sites shows that both alter the aspirational trajectories of some of their students. Moreover, such 'aspirational gain' should be judged against a background of disadvantage. For a student with a history of drug use, 'not being here' meant just that:

> *Six months ago I wasn't even expecting to be here. And when I first started I didn't expect it would last either. But I have gradually grown to love it and stuck at it. Because of my problems, I didn't expect to stick at it and I wouldn't have expected it when I was on drugs and that. But as soon as I got myself sorted out after my mum leaving and that, I have gradually got the motivation to come here, because I want to prove to my mum that I aren't a waster and that I want to make something of my life* (student).

Because of the multi-agency traits of the Leeds provision and the intense nature of the course, it offered students more immediate support in addressing many of their problems. The students' aspirations in Manchester reflected the extent to which they were already 'inside' the system:

Interviewer: *Are you thinking of going to university?*

Interviewee: *Yeah, but it depends on the university whether I have to pay my own fees. If I did, then I'll just go out and get a job. But I'm really into art and design* (student).

In Leeds, students' aspirations may reflect the degree to which they have to face more pressing difficulties. However, the intensity of the course and the degree to which it motivates and engages students do present some potential difficulties. Where students' aspirations cannot be met, they may slip back into behaviours that exacerbate their social and educational exclusion. Where they go next was therefore of concern to their personal advisers:

> *There is an issue about college provision, because colleges aren't yet on a 'roll-on, roll-off' basis, the majority of them. So they can't 'roll on' until September. So what we don't want to do is to have very engaged young people and nowhere for them to go* (TEC personnel).

Because the Manchester provision was linked to existing models of progression, it offered students greater continuity. The longer-term nature of the provision, and the fact that it was embedded in a course of study, may allow student aspirations to be met. In Leeds, there is a danger that,

after an initial burst of engagement and motivation, students may not be able to access those post-provision routes that will allow them to fulfil their aspirations.

5.3.6 Difficulties in the post-16 Youthstart programme that may impact on providers' ability to successfully engage and motivate young people

One of the major difficulties facing post-16 provision related to the referral of young people on to programmes of learning. In both of the sites studied, CAPE UK did not play a leading role in referrals or student recruitment. In Leeds, CAPE was much more closely involved with provision, whereas in Manchester, the model more closely resembled the school-based partnerships. This meant that in Leeds the degree to which some students were disengaged from society was not fully considered by those referring students to CAPE:

> *I think they knew that there would be a number of clients that were very disaffected and disengaged, and I think this is just by the referral system that we have. They have a lot of clients that had very, very similar backgrounds in terms of offending backgrounds, and I think it was quite difficult because there were a lot of them within one group. And so we have looked at how we deliver things and at the referral systems, because I think the referral system just needed tweaking a little bit to make sure there was a balance. So we've done that* (TEC personnel).

The presence of such 'difficult' students placed pressure on the creative professionals and CAPE personnel, particularly because their backgrounds were not known prior to enrolment. In some respects, this allowed students to leave behind any identity that may influence the response of others to them, but it also placed a considerable burden on those at the point of provision. Problems manifested themselves in some degree of confusion at the point of provision. Usually these stemmed from incomplete information about the student, but in one instance poor referral procedures threatened physical safety of staff, when vital information was withheld. In Leeds, the risk assessment procedures had to be revisited in the light of inappropriate placing of students and CAPE itself had to become involved in training its own and other personnel in issues of health and safety.

In Manchester, the referrals procedures were through the FE central admissions system. This freed up the providers to concentrate on the activities themselves, but may have led to an unnecessary degree of organisational influence on the partnership. For example, there is some evidence of administrative involvement in the ways in which students' engagement in creative activities was recorded. Students were recorded as active on ESF-funded activities when such a level of engagement would have precluded them from taking part in any other learning activity.

Overall, the evidence suggests that CAPE has effectively provided creative activities and opportunities at post-16. Furthermore, these activities successfully engaged and motivated an appreciable proportion of the disaffected young people they targeted. The ESF funding was used at both sites to provide both additional and alternative educational opportunities for young people, many of whom were disadvantaged within the current system. These creative activities had a significant impact on the experiences of some of these young people and, according to them, shaped their educational and post-educational aspirations.

5.4 CAPE principles and programmes of learning focused on the ESF target group

The extent to which CAPE principles had informed programmes of learning focused on ESF target groups varied according to the degree of influence CAPE was able to exert on the nature of provision within the programmes. When that provision was delegated to another provider (such as a college of FE), the evidence suggests that it was more difficult to maintain influence. In school-based partnerships, the relationship between CAPE UK and the programmes of learning was mediated by the school-based coordinator, and they identified four main areas where there were some difficulties:

- the curricular location or relevance of Youthstart activities;
- the age-related criteria for beneficiaries of ESF funding;
- the bureaucratic burden of ESF; and
- the need for accreditation.

A number of coordinators (six) were very positive about Youthstart in general and were adamant that CAPE principles could inform programmes of learning. Their views were often based on their experiences of coming to terms with the intricacies of ESF funding and successfully using it to provide creative opportunities for marginalised young people. The experience of most coordinators was of managing the implementation of creative activities. They were the closest to any difficulties that ESF funding presented to the aims of a partnership. Their views reflect this proximity and their mediating role between CAPE UK and the other partners.

Headteachers who took part in the research were more concerned that the targeting criteria generated a degree of conflict between CAPE principles and the funding source. Creative professionals were generally less aware of such tensions, but those who raised such issues (five) focused on the effect of ESF funding on the partnership overall (e.g. restricting funds for primary partners), or on the 'prescriptive' nature of targeting or accreditation. There was a degree to which some creative professionals welcomed the opportunity that any difficulties concerning ESF provided to clarify

principles within a partnership: '*ESF has challenged those working within CAPE, made them formulate their views more and articulate their aims more clearly*' (creative professional).

There was no evidence within the partnerships of a formal strategy to ensure that CAPE principles were informing programmes of learning that focus on ESF target groups, although such a strategy was set out by CAPE UK (it was simply not referred to by the interviewees). Partnerships were given guidance (both orally and in written form) and assistance in terms of meeting the accreditation aspects of ESF. However, there was evidence of less formal and somewhat 'negotiated' strategies that included: the creative interpretation of targeting criteria; the extension of ESF-funded activities to wider groups; the collective affirmation of CAPE principles; and the withdrawal from ESF-related activities.

The most common of these strategies involved targeting, where the ESF beneficiaries were the target of the activity, but partnerships found some way of granting access to that activity, or extending it, to others. This could include performance, mentoring or the creative use of school time so that ESF beneficiaries were themselves used as a 'creative asset' within the partnership. Another strategy was the affirmation of CAPE principles at regional meetings and through the informal networks that underpinned the initiative. These opportunities were enhanced through conferences, cross-partnership visits or residential experiences.

Withdrawal from the ESF 'dimension' of CAPE was a deliberate strategy that was only evident in one partnership; in others, withdrawal was less marked, but evident in a reluctance to take up ESF funding. Reasons for withdrawal mirrored the areas of difficulty outlined above. However, what remained evident from interview and other data was that CAPE principles could inform ESF-funded activities when those principles were articulated within a partnership. This made it difficult for constrained partnerships (where such principles were diluted or lost) to achieve a degree of symmetry between the principles underpinning CAPE UK and the ESF. In extensive partnerships, such symmetry was easier to achieve, or at least the contradictions were diminished through collective efforts to seek solution. However, because there was evidence that one extensive partnership withdrew from ESF-funded activities, we cannot make any links between partnership type and strategies to ensure that CAPE principles informed programmes of learning.

CAPE UK itself played a significant role in ensuring its principles were conveyed in the activities implemented, making links to broader educational issues:

> *Well, I think the initial planning, well, I think it was a nightmare when they realised quite the restraints of ESF and how it would impact. But I think in practice, when people have, kind of, just realised that this is all to do with teaching and learning anyway, whether it's focused on a disadvantaged group or whether you*

> *can embed that group within a bigger group and carry out the work. Yes, I mean the tension was there, because it was actually looking at a target group, but I think that people have recognised actually that it's turned into a strength, in that it's allowed some very focused work. It's allowed people to really think through the whole teaching and learning thing* (CAPE personnel).

It was in confronting the difficulties that ESF funding posed that led to the resolution of many tensions within the partnerships. For some of those involved in the initiative, it appeared that funding was sought without fully understanding its consequence on implementation. In essence, the income source had a disproportionate effect. However, ESF allowed CAPE to support a wide range of activities, and subsequently, and in collaboration with partners, many contradictions were resolved.

6. REFLECTION AND EVALUATION

6.1 Reflecting on and evaluating the impact of the initiative on learners

The ways in which partnerships reflected on and evaluated their progress in the implementation of creative activities are a major concern to CAPE UK. One of the objectives of the evaluation was:

> **(vi) to assess the extent to which schools and other providers are reflecting on and evaluating the CAPE initiative and its impact on learners.**

Within this aim are a series of sub-questions:

1. What methods of internal evaluation are in place?
2. How are partnerships and providers mapping or measuring (a) the development of creative teaching methods and (b) the development of creativity in the learner?
3. What strategies of reflection are being practised within the partnership and what is their influence on implementation and future planning?
4. What methods exist to facilitate the sharing of good practice?

This chapter will address the above objective and sub-questions, and will present an overview of the ways in which reflection and evaluation were taking place. It will also suggest ways in which reflection and evaluation impacted on both the learner and the current or future implementation of creative activities.

6.2 Methods of evaluation

Of the 21 school-based partnerships and the two post-16 providers taking part in the evaluation, most had initiated some method of internal review or evaluation. Evidence of those evaluative strategies used within a partnership was collected through interviews and, where appropriate, from documentary sources.

The most common approach across the initiative was a mixed-method evaluation, collecting data in both structured and less structured ways (both quantitative and qualitative data can be collected in highly structured or less structured ways). The structured dimension was often based on the *formal* collection of quantitative data related to participation and outcome.

The less structured dimension was often based on the *informal* collection of qualitative data related to experiences and process. Two partnerships adopted a wholly structured approach, formally collecting data that only related to participation and outcome. Eight adopted a less structured approach, focusing on collecting data informally, concerning experience, process, participation and perceptions of outcome. Table 6.1 (below) illustrates the range of approaches across the initiative as a whole.

Table 6.1 Methods of review and evaluation

Methods of review and evaluation adopted	Partnerships (including post-16 provision) *N = 23*
Less structured only	8
Mixed	10
More structured only	2
None	3

Source: *NFER Stage 2 evaluation*

There was evidence of reliance on informal methods, and in many cases, time was set aside after each stage of implementation to review progress:

Interviewer: *Do you review your activities?*

Interviewee: *A lot of discussion after the projects with the people involved on what they think, what they feel, how they feel they may go forward if they want to. I review it quite a lot, sort of go over it and discuss it with other people* (coordinator).

The frequency of review was related to the frequency of activity. In one partnership, for example, informal discussions were held three times each day during a full week of creative activity. In many cases (15), such discussions included the pupils engaged in the activity itself.

Often the creative activities were described as quite time consuming and the evaluation of them could take second place to their implementation. There was also evidence of some resistance to formal methods of evaluation in a context where they could be seen as somewhat inanimate in comparison with the dynamic nature of the initiative:

> *I think that going through the process of a CAPE project is enough in itself. It's difficult to evaluate the outcome. It's difficult to say what has been successful. I have formed a questionnaire for young people to fill in, to see how they feel about the project, to say the experiences they have had, but I found it quite a cold and calculated way of actually producing evidence* (coordinator).

In partnerships where formal methods were preferred, there was a desire to produce evidence that was in some way more 'compelling'. In one partnership, for example, the coordinator recorded all the activities in terms of the participants, processes and learning outcomes, linked these to the curricular location of the activity, and maintained a database for use within the school. In most partnerships, the strategies of evaluation could be described as less structured, layered and contingent on the coordinator. Moreover, where the initiative was contained within a School Development Plan, this was generally accompanied by a commitment to review progress annually at SMT level.

The research found that the methods of evaluation that were in place in many partnerships were not able to provide evidence of the impact of the initiative on teaching and learning. There was a reliance on *ad hoc*, informal, almost conversational methods of evaluation in eight partnerships. Here, it is not the nature of the data that is at issue (qualitative or quantitative) but the unplanned and unstructured nature of its collection, analysis or interpretation and use. However, in many partnerships (16), there was also evidence of a *desire* to address some of the issues that emerged from the initiative in a more structured or coherent way, particularly for colleagues who may be sceptical of the claims made on its behalf. In one partnership, for example, the partners had developed a range of more 'creative' methods appropriate to both the aims of the initiative and the particularistic strengths of the participants.

CAPE itself is developing agreed strategies for internal reflection, identifying evaluation as a central feature of its own planning. In addition, there was evidence of the development of evaluation methods specific to the initiative. In one partnership, for example, the pupils were engaged in self-reflection via film. They interviewed each other about their experiences of engaging in creative activities and then produced a film about those experiences. Other activities lent themselves to written methods: in another partnership, the products of a creative activity involving textiles were displayed alongside the research background to the product and a written evaluation of the process of production. Some activities did not lend themselves to written methods, and an added dimension was the ability or nature of the pupil or student group. Where partnerships had engaged quite marginal disaffected young people in creative activities, there was a desire to avoid evaluative strategies that resembled 'school work'. In conclusion, therefore, it is possible to point to a number of features concerning the methods of evaluation and review that were currently in place:

- both formal and informal methods were in use across the initiative, often within the same partnership;
- in many partnerships, evaluation relied on less structured methods;
- some partnerships were developing 'creative' or more appropriated methods of evaluation in terms of the participants and the aims of the initiative;
- in partnerships where the SMT was more actively involved, there were more adequate, or comprehensive, systems of evaluation;

- the inclusion of the initiative on the School Development Plan assisted evaluation and review;
- the responsibility for evaluation rested largely on the school-based coordinator; and
- support was available to participants from CAPE UK, LEAs and through access to the broader research community.

It was evident that some partnerships had a greater capacity for evaluation, and it may be possible for partnerships to learn from each other the most appropriate methods and the contexts in which specific approaches work best.

6.3 Mapping the development of creative teaching and creativity in the learner

There is little evidence, as yet, that outside of the strategies of evaluation and review outlined above, partnerships were adopting distinct strategies that measured or mapped the development of creative teaching and the development of creativity in the learner. However, the evaluation did find that participants were keen to gauge the impact of the initiative in five key areas (discussed more fully in Chapter 5):

1. increasing pupils' engagement in learning;
2. increasing pupils' attainment in school tests or public examinations;
3. retaining pupils in educational settings;
4. returning pupils to educational setting; and
5. rejoining pupils' fragmented or interrupted educational careers.

Developing creative teaching methods and developing creativity in the learner were seen as means to the above ends, rather than as ends in themselves. The reluctance to comment on these issues perhaps reflected a degree of shared assumptions concerning creativity, for example that creative teaching methods and developing creativity in the learners were 'assumed' as outcomes of any engagement in creative activities. Moreover, the reluctance of partnerships to tie themselves to a specific interpretation of creativity (see Chapter 3) may have led to their unwillingness to 'impose' any specific approach to how it may be advanced and measured through teaching and learning. It may be the case, therefore, that in order to overcome the tensions within a partnership concerning interpretations of creativity (and how it may be advanced through activities), participants based their practice on generalist assumptions that what they were doing would necessarily develop creative teaching methods and would necessarily develop creativity in the learner.

This tension could be felt between the various professionals within any single partnership (such as teachers and creative professionals), within a single professional group within a partnership (such as within the teaching population), or between different partnerships. For example, the creative professionals in two partnerships shared similar democratic definitions of creativity, which in turn led to their particular approach to develop creative teaching and learning, one that sought extension beyond an arts base and considered the creative potential of all participants, rather than focusing on evidence of their existing ability. However, within both partnerships, there existed a degree of difference in definition between the creative professionals and other participants. In one of these partnerships, for example, the creative professional and the initiative itself were referred to as an 'artist in residence' and an 'arts initiative' by the headteacher, suggestive of a sectoral definition. Where the coordinator and creative professional were able to agree on a shared definition and a shared approach within the partnership, they also faced assumptions based on perceptions of creativity (and their role in extending or granting access to it) that were different from their own.

A similar but unrelated issue was that participants felt reluctant to formalise their practice in a relatively fluid and ambiguous context. While the research sought to identify and track the development of creative teaching methods, it is more accurate to suggest that a series of teaching experiments was taking place and that there was little consensus as to what creative teaching methods were. This was evidenced by teachers' resentment of any assumption that they were not already 'creative teachers' or teaching creatively. By stressing the need to develop explicit methods to measure the impact of such teaching methods, one might alienate those whose practice one is seeking to influence. In short, some teachers and creative professionals adopted the view that the desire to develop and formalise a consensus on creative teaching methods sat uneasily with a democratic definition of creativity.

6.4 Strategies of reflection and their influence on implementation and future planning

A problem identified by the research was the limited time for reflection. CAPE is in many ways a unique initiative in providing resources for coordinators to plan and reflect. Many of those interviewed reported that they *did* reflect on CAPE activities, but would like to have reflected on them more often:

> *Reflection is a natural part of what we do, but I think it's the last thing we think of doing, because there's always the next project driving you on, and it's time – that's the problem* (coordinator).

This concern with time was felt most keenly at the secondary school level, by school-based coordinators:

Interviewer: *How much time do your coordinating activities take up?*

Interviewee: *It's difficult to quantify because it's sort of five or ten minutes here, there and everywhere. So it's a constant thing really – making phone calls and organising things; doing a form here, a form there.*

Interviewer: *So there's not a discrete time?*

Interviewee: *No, not at all. Because I don't get any time to do, like, separate from my timetable. So it's a case of lunchtime, break time, after school* (coordinator).

Some coordinators reported that they spend an inordinate amount of time working at home on CAPE-related activities: often over two hours each evening. The evaluation took place at the end of the current phase of ESF funding and the end of the school year; there is a possibility that the organisational and administrative burden of the initiative may be sapping the goodwill of coordinators. Reflection tended, therefore, to be 'snatched': a fleeting activity that took place between activities and that had to fit in with the pressures of the school day.

Creative professionals faced different issues, but were under no less pressure than the coordinators. The initiative provided generous funding for activities, but there was evidence that creative professionals contributed more time than they are contracted for, often because of a personal or professional commitment to a partnership or to individuals within it. A lack of time affected their opportunities to reflect fully on the initiative. However, where a lead creative was in place, they were able to network across creative professionals and feed back their collective views into the partnership:

> *I have a good strong relationship with the artists and they are not scared to tell me what's what, or what their experience is compared to working in other situations. So that's – I feed a lot of that back* (creative professional).

The lead creative played an important role in funnelling these reflections into future activities or plans for activities. Where they were evident, they reduced the pressure on the coordinator and brought a range of specific attributes to the partnership. In one partnership, for example, the coordinator was concerned that some of the more peripheral creative professionals (the 'project artists') were not feeding back their views to the partnership, or not feeding them back in a form that could influence planning and implementation. The lead creative played an important role in accessing the collected reflections of the creative community and relaying them back to partnership members.

There was little evidence of strategies of reflection that extended beyond these time-constrained attempts to influence planning and implementation. However, this does not suggest that such reflection is unhelpful or does not lead to developments within a partnership. Many of the coordinators

interviewed spoke of the pace of the initiative and the speed with which decisions were taken and revised in action. Observations of creative activities support their assertions that individuals and groups reflected on their actions (individual and collective) at the time of implementation and made changes if required. What is not clear is the degree to which this reflection is brought together for the benefit of the partnership overall. Beyond the activity itself, there may be room for greater collaboration and direction.

6.5 Methods to facilitate the sharing of good practice

Most of the partnerships (14) had adopted methods of sharing practice, including all the extensive partnerships. Those partnerships that had not adopted such methods (seven) comprised all of the constrained partnerships and a number of developing partnerships. Extensive partnerships were more likely to have adopted methods of sharing practice than other partnership types.

The nature of the initiative and the activities implemented through it lent themselves to certain strategies of sharing practice, particularly when a presentation, performance or display was possible. There was evidence of a desire to 'showcase' activities, and a number of partnerships used this strategy to draw in their community and to engage young people. One partnership, for example, invited the community into the school to 'showcase' the routine that would form the school entry to the '*Global Rock Challenge*'. The event was valued for its potential to address negative perceptions of the school within the community and of pupils attending it.

Within the partnership schools, there was a range of existing routes for sharing good practice that were used. These included staff briefings, newsletters, departmental meetings, the academic board, governors meetings and the general SMT structure. A number of those interviewed suggested that evidence of the impact of activities on teaching and learning was required in schools and that this requirement focused the minds of those taking part on what impact the initiative was having on learners. However, there was also a degree to which these existing routes were offered as potential strategies rather than strategies in operation. Such routes can be 'crowded' out by other initiatives, and the support of the SMT is required in order to gain access to them. Where the support of the SMT was evident, there was a greater chance that these routes were used and formed an important strategy for sharing practice. Where such support was not evident, or was less strong, there was evidence of a rhetorical commitment to their use.

Some partnerships were seeking new routes for sharing practice. These do not dispense with existing structures (such as discussion at SMT level), but sought to make the best use of alternatives. In one partnership, for example, teacher trainees were involved in the initiative. This helped to share practice with other educational institutions and extend the impact of the initiative

beyond the partnership. In another partnership, the need to accredit some of the activities meant that evidence of learning gains was required, compelling those involved to address learning and talk to each other about how it was assessed. This had involved the SMT more fully than if the activities had not been accredited, and raised the profile (and perhaps the status) of the initiative within the partnership.

Personal contact was a common strategy for sharing good practice. The coordinators, in particular, attached great value to the opportunities that different CAPE conferences gave to talk to others:

> *I think it's really helpful for us to get together and share practice and just generally, just tell our stories to one another as much as anything* (coordinator).

The main site for cross-partnership conversations was the regional meetings, and these provided a useful arena for sharing practice across the initiative, but some coordinators were concerned that it was difficult to talk about failure in such settings:

> *I am quite happy to talk about successes and failures myself, but there hasn't really been a forum for that and when you are at the meetings, basically you go round and say what you are doing, and it's not an appropriate situation to say this has been a total disaster* (coordinator).

There was a feeling (especially amongst those associated with constrained partnerships) that there was a slightly 'competitive' edge at the meetings and that a partnership representative did not wish to be seen as the only one experiencing difficulty or making little progress:

> *I have been quite dismayed really by how little discussion there has been between different partnerships, and partly, it's been a bit of a beauty contest, which is a general thing in the arts and probably in education as well, because everyone goes on about how wonderful their projects are* (creative professional).

However, this perceived lack of internal criticism was countered by the supportive role played by regional coordinators and CAPE development workers. In both regions, they visited schools and dealt with issues that could not be raised at regional meetings. Their more 'informal' approach allowed participants to identify any difficulties outside the arena of peer review. New coordinators felt isolated from regional meetings, and one suggested that a mentoring or 'buddy' system might allow them to come up to speed with the rest of the group. At the time of the evaluation, it was felt that the regional meetings had become bogged down in paperwork, rather than providing an arena for the sharing of practice:

> *I mean, for me, one of the main purposes of the coordinators' meetings would be to share ideas and look at what other schools are doing. And really, it has happened, but it hasn't happened enough. There has been too much admin that got in the way at those meetings* (headteacher).

Overall, there was some feeling of isolation on the part of the coordinator, although in extensive partnerships, this isolation was less evident. The role of informal networks in strategies to share practice should not be overlooked. At a regional level, there was evidence of strong cross-partnership links and successful strategies of cooperation outside the more formal structure of initiative management. However, the strategies to share practice were differentially formed at the current time. The ways in which these successes may be shared may be an important consideration, particularly for constrained partnerships, where the absence of SMT support may limit the ability of participants to share their work with others.

7. PARTNERSHIP AIMS: THEIR CONTINUITY IN IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Introduction

An objective of the evaluation was to examine the aims within the initiative and to map any change. The Stage 1 evaluation (Ashworth *et al.*, 1998) found that many participants equated creativity with the arts, anticipating that there may be difficulty in progressing from this quite narrow 'arts base' to a broader definition. The Stage 2 evaluation sought to map any change and:

(vii) to examine the degree of continuity between the initial aims, the aims as currently perceived and the aims that are evident in the implementation of the initiative.

This objective contained within it a series of sub-questions, each to be addressed in the research:

1. How do participants currently perceive the aims of the initiative?
2. Do they see any differences between these and the initial aims?
3. What factors appear to account for any changes in aims and priorities?
4. Are the initial and current aims commensurate with the aims and priorities manifested in the plans and activities mounted?
5. How far have partnerships progressed towards meeting their own and CAPE UK's aims in terms of implementation criteria?
6. Have the developments had a narrow or wide-ranging impact on the institutions involved?

The first two of these sub-questions will be addressed together – firstly, by setting out the participants' current perceptions of CAPE UK's aims and then by examining how the participants perceive any change from these original aims. The remaining sub-questions will be addressed separately, although there remain some difficulties concerning the availability of data that would allow us to fully address sub-question four.

7.2 (a) Participants' perceptions of the current aims of the initiative

The way in which the current aims of the initiative were perceived reflected the participants' proximity to it, their professional identity (or role in it) and the partnership type. For example, a majority (11) of headteachers and members of the SMT were unaware of the current aims of CAPE UK, or at least felt unable to articulate them precisely (this was related to their management of numerous school-based initiatives). They were, however, able to provide data on what they *perceived* the current aims of CAPE UK to be and from these perceptions we were able to identify three broad areas: (i) to develop the arts in education; (ii) to develop creativity in general; and (iii) to develop creativity across the curriculum. Of the headteachers and members of the SMT who stated that they were aware of the current aims of CAPE UK, all of them located these aims in area (iii): to develop creativity across the curriculum (all of these interviewees were also located in extensive partnerships). Where participants were not fully aware of the aims of CAPE UK, then they were identified specifically with: (i) to develop the arts in education (four); (ii) to develop creativity in general (three); and in a minority of cases (two), with providing funding for school-based activities.

The perception of the coordinators differed from members of the SMT in two important respects: more coordinators were aware of the current aims of CAPE UK and they were more willing to articulate what those aims were. This does not mean that there was unanimity of perception, merely that the coordinators, possibly because of their role in the initiative, were more willing to state what they perceived CAPE UK's current aims to be. Of those coordinators participating in the research (23), 14 located CAPE UK's current aims in area (iii): to develop creativity across the curriculum. Nine coordinators located them in area (ii): to develop creativity in general, but no coordinators located them in area (i): to develop the arts in education. A 'core' of six coordinators also associated CAPE UK's current aims more closely with teaching and learning, albeit within the more general reference to developing creativity across the curriculum. Furthermore, all of these coordinators were located within extensive partnerships, suggestive of an elaborated interpretation of aims in those partnerships, or a greater sensitivity to the aims than the more general heading of area (iii).

The perceptions of the creative professionals sat somewhat between those of the coordinators and the headteachers or members of the SMT. A substantial minority of creative professionals (seven) were unsure of CAPE UK's current aims. Within this 'uncertain' group, there was a tendency to perceive the aims as: (ii) to develop creativity in general (often with an additional reference to enhancing teaching and learning). Those who are aware of the aims (six) perceived them as: (iii) to develop creativity across the curriculum. The remainder (two) perceived them as: (i) to develop the arts in education. When we examined the perceptions of all those interviewed, we found that the majority located CAPE UK's current aims in area (iii) (see Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Participants' perceptions of the current aims of CAPE UK

	(i) to develop the arts in education *N*	(ii) to develop creativity in general *N*	(iii) to develop creativity across the curriculum *N*	Other *N*
Coordinators	0	9	11	3
Creative professionals	2	7	6	0
Headteachers and members of the SMT	4	2	6	2
Total	6	18	23	5

Source: *NFER Stage 2 evaluation*

From these same data, it was possible to associate responses with partnership type to some degree. For example, creative professionals who perceived the current aims of CAPE UK as area (iii) were experienced creative professionals, primarily (but not exclusively) operating within extensive partnerships (often the individuals who were experienced were found in extensive partnerships); whereas those who perceived the aims of CAPE UK as areas (i) and (ii) were less experienced creative professionals, primarily (but not exclusively) operating within developing, or within constrained, partnerships.

In light of this, we suggest that the current aims of CAPE UK were perceived on the basis of four factors:

- an individual's role within the initiative;
- an individual's proximity to the implementation of creative activities;
- duration of involvement in the initiative; and
- partnership type.

7.2 (b) Participants' perceptions of differences between the current aims and the original aims

The participants were asked to describe any change in their perceptions of CAPE UK's aims: *Do you think that the aims of CAPE UK have changed since this initiative was first proposed?* Within any given partnership, there tended to be general agreement on whether the aims of CAPE had or had not changed, and the responses were contingent on the partnership type, rather than on the individual's role within it. This continuity across participants and within a partnership means that the responses can be placed in three categories: (a) that there has been no change in CAPE UK's aims; (b) that there have been some changes in CAPE UK's aims; and (c) that there have been major changes in CAPE UK's aims (see Table 7.2).

Table 7.2 Perceptions of changes to the aims of CAPE UK by partnership

Perceptions of CAPE UK's aims	(a) No change	(b) Some change	(c) Major changes
Partnerships	4	9	8

Source: *NFER Stage 2 evaluation*

In examining that category where no change was reported, we found that there existed a perception of stability and continuity:

Interviewer: *Do you think that the aims of CAPE UK have changed since this initiative was first proposed?*

Interviewee: *I don't think so. I think fundamentally that the concept that was there in the early days is still there. I think it's still there and people keep reminding everyone about it, so it's still there* (coordinator).

Such views were more prevalent within extensive partnerships and this presented an interesting dimension to the analysis in that the aims of CAPE UK were perceived to have remained stable in some, but not all extensive partnerships. Therefore, where partnership type did not wholly correspond with perceptions of stability in aims, there was some association. Where some change was reported, there remained an association with partnership type rather than professional role, but the range of partnership types within which such perceptions were held was more varied, taking in both developing and constrained partnerships:

Interviewer: *Do you think that the aims of CAPE UK have changed since this initiative was first proposed?*

Interviewee: *I don't think they have deliberately changed. I think they have been changed by the way that they have been funded, and the demands of the funders have changed the way the CAPE initiative has gone. I don't think it's been necessarily a conscious decision, 'Let's go down here and do this'. I think it's something they have had to bend to* (coordinator).

Within this type of response, the main perception for change was funding, with the ESF funding criteria specifically singled out. However, participants reported 'realignment' and 'repositioning' to marry the aims of CAPE UK to those within ESF, rather than a radical shift.

Where participants reported major changes to CAPE UK's aims, the issue of ESF was raised, but it was one of a range of factors, some of which were not perceived as extrinsic to CAPE UK, but emanating from within it. There were a number of partnerships (eight) within this category, and contained within these were all of the constrained partnerships (three), the remainder being those typified as developing. Within this group were some who perceived that the initial aims were being 'surrendered' or lost through

changes within CAPE. These concerns were expressed around the issue of advocacy, the way in which CAPE UK was perceived to have shifted its aims from supporting creative activity in schools, to advocating them. Although this was a minority point of view, there was a perception that CAPE UK had 'failed' in some way, perhaps indicative of the inherent tensions between seeking to effect change at the local level and seeking to move beyond the local level, to inform a broader regional or national agenda.

In conclusion, we can say that there was a possible association between partnership type and the degree to which CAPE UK's current aims were perceived to have changed from its original aims. Should this be the case, then the aims of CAPE UK may have become clearer to participants during implementation. Where *implementation* has been applied in a broad, extensive and inclusive context, the aims were not a source of tension; where it has been less so, participants were more likely to have found it difficult to reconcile the current aims with the original aims as they were perceived.

7.3 Factors implicated in any changes to partnership aims and priorities

In order to address the research objective, it is necessary to examine the third of our sub-questions: *What factors appear to account for any changes in partnership aims and priorities?* Firstly, participants were asked if there had been any change to their priorities, before being asked to discuss the possible causes of such change (the initiative was conceived of as experimental and developmental, so such change was not unexpected).

There was evidence of changed priorities at the majority of partnerships (20), and at only one was it reported that the priorities remained the same. Participants were asked to identify any changes in priorities at an individual or partnership level in order to examine the extent of and factors implicated in such changes. Those factors identified as being behind any changes to priorities were:

- the curriculum and issues associated with teaching and learning;
- changes in approaches to implementation;
- a movement from larger to smaller activities; and
- a move from a concern with outcome to a concern with process.

Of these four issues, the curriculum and issues associated with teaching and learning were least associated with partnership type. That is, the responses were not consistent within a partnership. In the majority of partnerships (18), there was evidence that CAPE activities have been perceived as compatible with a desire to improve teaching and learning and enhance the curriculum.

There was a common perception (expressed by 32 participants) that CAPE activities have to enhance the existing curriculum and match school-level priorities. This was reflected in the concern of coordinators to find new and innovative ways to initiate change within the school:

> *I have realised that there is no point in approaching a department as a whole because they just don't want to know. There's no point in approaching the head of the department, because they are probably not the right person to talk to. They might be, but what you have got to do is approach people who you think have got some sympathy for going beyond their own quite narrow teaching world, people who are quite personable and are going to enjoy working with other people who are coming in from outside. So, you have got to sort of 'suss out' the staff and try and approach people who you think are going to be receptive* (coordinator).

What this may suggest is that coordinators were developing new strategies to implementation. Where implementation had been successful in one curricular area, but perhaps partial or less successful than anticipated in another, shifting the departmental focus of the initiative becomes a priority. Furthermore, the strategies set out in the example above point to an awareness on the part of coordinators that new routes into departments need to be created in some schools and new relationships forged outside existing (potentially hierarchical) structures. In this respect, the shifting priorities associated with both coordinators and partial partnerships suggest that the lessons of implementation are leading to the development of new approaches to implementation.

Across a number of partnerships (eight) it was reported that activities were moving from large to small scale. In the majority of these cases, this followed large whole-school activities: the 'big-bang' approach to implementation. However, there was also recognition in this shift that the visibility of the initiative may be affected and may rely on productions, performance or display:

> *What's happening now is that the projects are more discrete, so they tend to be with an individual class and it's only at the end, perhaps when the work is displayed, that the rest of the school actually see what has been going on* (deputy head).

However, across the initiative as a whole, there was evidence of a general shift in priorities from outcome such as artefacts and creative products to teaching and learning processes. This was particularly associated with creative professionals and coordinators, and may reflect the recognition that the outcome was only part of the creative process:

> *I think at first I was more concerned with the actual outcomes. Yes, I was very concerned with the outcomes of what – where we could see what we've done at the end of it. And now, I'm much more concerned with the realisation, with the actual implementation and the process. I'm much more concerned with the process now than I was at the beginning. The outcomes will*

change, depending on what the children are doing and the way they work with the artists. Also, I think I've become a bit more flexible as well (coordinator).

Teachers reported that this shift was quite significant, because the focus on creative product may take precedence over a focus on the processes of learning. Those teachers who reported that their priorities had shifted from product to process reported such changes in quite personal terms, as something that had happened to them. This may suggest that engagement in the initiative is quite beneficial in terms of teachers' professional development.

7.4 Assessing whether the initial and current aims are commensurate with the aims and priorities manifested in the plans and activities mounted

The fourth of our sub-questions concerns the commensurability between initial and current priorities and implemented creative activities: *Are the initial and current aims commensurate with the aims and priorities manifested in the plans and activities mounted?* This sub-question poses specific difficulties in terms of drawing conclusions from the available evidence. The question is an overall analytical question and it was not put to the participants. Therefore, in order to answer the question, evidence was sought from all the data collected. On one hand, these data did not lend themselves to the degree of interrogation that was required to address the question. On the other hand, in attempting to answer the question, we found that the complexity of factors that played on the analysis rendered the data unsuitable as a base on which to ground any conclusion:

The original *and* the current aims of CAPE UK were perceived differently by the participants, and the degree to which both were perceived to have changed was linked to a participant's role in the initiative, their proximity to implementation, duration of involvement and partnership type. It is not possible, therefore, to assess the degree of commensurability between aims and activities because of the complexity of the data.

The second factor that inhibits our analysis is the complexity of partnership plans and partnership planning. In Chapter 3 we illustrated the distinction between plans and the processes of planning. To therefore seek the commensurability of the initial and current aims with the aims and priorities manifested in plans (as opposed to planning) risks over-simplification.

The third factor that inhibits our analysis is that of implementation. Bearing in mind the concerns above, we illustrated in Chapter 4 that there are ten key issues concerning implementation that may be generalisable across partnerships. Those activities cannot easily be analysed on the basis of participants' perceptions of the initial or current aims that implemented activities embody.

Although the interview and other data do not allow us to fully explore these possible changes to the partnerships' aims and priorities (manifested in the plans and activities mounted), we are able to suggests that in between planning, there may be factors that render some of the aims over-ambitious, but that this does not, necessarily point to a lack of *commensurability* between initial and current aims and the aims and priorities in the plans and activities mounted.

7.5 Partnership progression towards meeting their own and CAPE UK's aims in terms of implementation criteria

The fifth of our sub-questions asks: *How far have partnerships progressed towards meeting their own and CAPE UK's aims in terms of implementation criteria?* Participants across the majority of partnerships (18) reported progress in meeting their own aims, although within a minority of partnerships (as discussed above) there was a feeling that their aims have been diluted or 'lost'. The degree to which their own aims matched those of CAPE UK, and the extent to which there was a perception that CAPE UK's aims have changed, form an interesting feature of our analysis.

Because the research corresponded with a period of transition in funding, a number of participants reported that their longer-term planning was influenced by a perceived uncertainty concerning funding. None the less, there was also evidence across a number of partnerships (12) that partnerships considered themselves to have 'moved on' from ESF and that they were developing new aims in the light of experience and under the general umbrella of CAPE UK:

> *I sometimes think that we are further down the line than even CAPE imagine, you know. When I look at some of the schemes that are being done in other schools, and I am very pleased for them, and I think 'We've moved on from that'* (headteacher).

These new aims may not have matched those of CAPE, and some of these 12 partnerships (three) had shifted away from developing external links to examining internal school issues such as teaching and learning. Moreover, the experience of implementation had led to some reappraisal of the concept of partnership and of CAPE aims. In one partnership, for example, there was a desire to meet the aims that participants felt had been neglected within ESF funding criteria:

Interviewer: *Would you say that what you have implemented reflects: a) your own aims; and b) the aims of CAPE UK?*

Interviewee: *I would say that what I have implemented reflects some of these aims, but not all of them, in the sense that my work has not been that curriculum based, in terms of it being after-school work.*

Interviewer: *You would have preferred it to be curriculum based?*

Interviewee: *No I wouldn't. I am just saying that my particular involvement was mainly extra-curricular and I know that one of CAPE's aims is very specifically to actually engage with the curriculum* (creative professional).

In this example, we see a desire to engage with the initiative further: to address the broader creative curriculum dimension. Across the initiative as whole, there was evidence of this interplay between personal, professional, partnership and sponsor aims. In the minority of partnerships (those typified as constrained), ESF formed a focal point around which general dissatisfaction gained expression. Evidence from the other partnerships (17) pointed to a more complex and interactive process during implementation, where the varying aims (and agendas) of the different participants were addressed, although not necessarily resolved. The degree of unanimity within a partnership would suggest that some were able to resolve any tensions between their internal aims (intra-partnership) and the aims of CAPE UK (extra-partnership). The aims of most of the partnerships had been met; a minority saw tension between their own and CAPE UK's aims; and the majority of partnerships were finding routes to resolve such tensions, if and where they were seen to exist.

There was evidence that the participants' original aims had been tempered, changed and revised in the light of implementation. Their current aims reflected that process. Similarly, there was evidence across partnerships that aims were defined in action, as the implementation took place:

> *I suppose, in a sense, I would say that when we started off, we were not clear where we were going entirely and it becomes clearer as you go on. You sort of harden the aims by thinking to yourself 'Well, how are we going to get this to move outwards?'. I mean, to begin with we were just pleased to get started on something because there did seem to be an incredibly long gestation and conception stage. But having got started, it was just nice to get started, so, in a sense, I would say that some of our aims have been defined as we have gone along* (coordinator).

Within this process, which many participants reported as quite difficult, there was evidence that individual aims came into conflict with the aims of CAPE UK (as perceived by the participants). During implementation, the individual aims of those involved in the initiative were challenged. In one partnership, for example, the school took part in the initiative in order to achieve a range of aims, some of which meshed with the initiative aims and some of which did not:

> *In the initial stages, the school and myself saw it as a nice funding agency, to try and bring about some of the work we wanted to do in the creative subjects. But then, in the first three or four months, I realised it wasn't that, it was more than that – it is more than that – and it's actually changed or modified my way of thinking as well* (coordinator).

Proximity to implementation had an effect on individual aims. In the example above, the coordinator was compelled to modify his own aims, from drawing down funding, to changing his way of thinking. Where he had seen CAPE as an income stream (albeit one that would permit the development of creativity), he had not expected to undergo any personal change. Moreover, within this example, there is a key reference to 'creative subjects', suggesting a sectoral definition of creativity.

There was some evidence that in constrained partnerships, where the curricular location of the initiative may have struggled to escape subjects associated with the arts, coordinators 'held on' to CAPE to some extent, pursuing their own aims rather than those of the partnership. As a consequence, the resource opportunities provided by CAPE UK were not shared across the school. In these instances, the distance between an individual's current aims and the aims of CAPE UK were perceived to be greater. In short, the coordinators who may be least willing to subject their own aims to challenge during implementation may perceive greater conflict between their own aims and those of CAPE: some participants 'retreated' into personal definitions of the aims of the initiative.

It was a feature of the evaluation that coordinators provided more data than other participants, both in terms of their representation in the research (there were more coordinators) and in amount. Very few creative professionals (five) provided information concerning their own aims when asked about them and about those of CAPE UK. None the less, on the basis of these results and from data provided under other headings, it may be suggested that the views of creative professionals showed some divergence from those of the coordinators. This may be linked to the nature of such interventions in schools. Creative professionals reported that school-based activities often presented creative professionals with short-term employment opportunities, rather than acting as vehicles for change. The CAPE initiative demanded a greater degree of engagement than creative professionals had previously experienced. Of those responding, all felt that their own aims had been considered when planning and implementing creative activities (often reported as a unique experience). Of some interest is the symmetry creative professionals reported between their own aims and those of CAPE UK. Although the rate of response diminishes the comparative value of the data, there was less reported 'distance' between CAPE's current aims and those of the creative professionals.

At the level of SMT, current aims were perceived as the successful continuation of the partnership and, in a minority of cases, of developing 'exit strategies'. Heads and members of the SMT were largely unable to elaborate on their own aims beyond the management of the initiative. Moreover, there was evidence of a lack of awareness of the aims of CAPE UK in a number of cases (four), reported as owing to 'initiative overload' or too little time to engage with CAPE as fully as they would have liked. None the less, in the majority of cases, heads and members of the SMT recounted less conflict of aims than coordinators and there was little regional difference.

Participants were asked to identify any change between their original aims and those they have now: if they saw any differences between these and the initial aims. The responses were categorised into six groups:

- the aims of the partnership remained broadly the same;
- the original aims were too ambitious and had been modified;
- the original aims had not been implemented;
- the partnership had moved on from the original aims; and
- the aims had been influenced by the focus on disaffected pupils.

The most common response was that the current aims remained unchanged from the original aims, and in the majority of partnerships (11), these aims were perceived to have been met. Across the initiative, there was evidence of continued enthusiasm. In many cases this stemmed from the experience of implementation, where somewhat general aims had led to positive teaching and learning experiences:

> *I think I was as enthusiastic then as I am now in terms of our aims. I do thoroughly enjoy it – even though I complain about not having enough time and stuff – because it's the reward of seeing the success, that the project's been successful and seeing the pupils really enjoying themselves* (coordinator).

Even in the minority of cases where the participants felt that the original aims had been lost, the experience of implementation was still positive. This suggests that where what was implemented may not have fully met the aims of the partnerships (or individuals within it), and there may have been some tensions (perceived or actual) between partnership aims and the aims of CAPE UK, through implementing creative educational activities these issues were largely resolved or relegated to the periphery of participants' concerns.

7.6 Assessing whether developments have had a narrow or wide-ranging impact on the institutions involved

Our final sub-question concerns the impact of the above developments on the institutions involved: *Have the developments had a narrow or wide-ranging impact on the institutions involved?* Our findings in relation to this question refer to secondary schools, as not all of the institutions involved in the initiative were involved in the evaluation. These included a large number of primary schools, businesses, arts organisations, colleges of further and higher education, etc. Moreover, because the impact of the initiative overall will be discussed later in this report (see Chapter 8), this section restricts its assessment to the impact of changes and developments to partnerships' aims and priorities.

The evidence points to a range of impacts, some of which were reported to have been short-lived and others of which were sustained. For example, in one partnership the aims had remained remarkably unchanged since the original application to form a partnership. Despite some minor modifications, these aims remained centred on media and broadcasting. From this case-study site, we are able to suggest that even where aims and priorities showed continuity, the impact was variable within the institution.

Impact has to be considered in the light of a range of factors. For example, one activity may have a limited overall impact, where another can have a strong impact that is only felt by few pupils; both have a variable impact at the partnership level. However, in the latter example it is the spread of the activity, rather than the activity itself, that leads to variable impact. Moreover, an activity with a strong impact over a large population may be variable, in that the activity is a 'one-off' school performance and any impact is not sustained far beyond it.

One source of assessing impact was by examining references to the activities implemented in a range of documentary sources (such as development plans, OFSTED reports, press reports, publicity material, etc.); another was in interview. In this broadcasting example (and linked to the priorities), the impact was sustained through the efforts of a core of teachers and creative professionals and had a high impact on those engaged, but was not available to the majority of pupils (although primary partners were involved, the activity at secondary level was quite contained).

In another partnership, the aims had undergone considerable revision: the partnership had implemented creative activities that bore little relationship to the original plan. From this case-study site, we were also able to suggest that where aims and priorities demonstrated such discontinuity, impact was variable within the institution. However (and linked to priorities), there was little evidence that the impact was sustained. A single individual was associated with most activities. In short, on the basis of the available evidence, it is possible that the relationship between aims and impact is overshadowed by other factors, partnership type in particular (although the sustainability of impact may be enhanced by maintaining clear priorities and setting out achievable aims in the first instance).

Evidence from the extensive partnerships (seven) and from developing partnerships (11) implicated a range of factors that influence impact, one of which was curricular location. At the risk of replicating the evidence on implementation presented earlier in this report (see Chapter 4), it was apparent that aims had been influenced, tempered and changed by a partnership's ability to implement creative activities across departments or subjects. A number of those interviewed (14) reported that failure in this respect had affected the impact on the institution:

> *The only thing that I would say is that it hasn't penetrated as far as I would have wanted it to go. I very much would have wanted us to focus on things like science, maths, technology, and I don't think we have hit those as hard as I would have wanted to* (headteacher).

This lack of penetration may be linked to those other factors associated with less successful implementation of plans: over-ambitious objectives, staffing difficulties, excessive rigidity or structure, the timetable, tests and examinations, the compatibility of personnel, and management issues. Although it is difficult to disentangle the impact of each of these, the evidence from the case-study sites suggested that impacts were more likely to be sustained when aims and priorities were clearly articulated. However, this does not imply that where they were not, there was no impact, simply that it may be short-lived. Further, the changes in aims and priorities referred to above do not necessarily correspond to a lack of institutional impact; some of those partnerships that reported the greatest degree of institutional impact struggled with their own aims and those of the other partners. In addition, the aims of CAPE UK, whilst in many respects constant, have also evolved through implementation. A minority of constrained partnerships (four) found this process dispiriting, and in these cases, there is evidence of very little impact, sustained or otherwise.

8. ENABLING AND INHIBITING FACTORS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CREATIVE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

8.1 Introduction

The penultimate chapter of this report focuses on the lessons that have been learned during the transitions to implementing creative activities. It addresses the eighth and final aim of the evaluation:

(viii) to identify the factors that have enabled or inhibited implementation at this stage.

Associated with this aim are three sub-questions, each of which will be answered through drawing on the experiences of the participants:

1. What lessons have been learned in the transition from planning to implementation?
2. Which areas require further support or consideration at the partnership and initiative levels?
3. What are the core features of successful and less successful implementation?

8.2 The lessons that have been learned in the transition from planning to implementation

The research related the experience of implementation to professional identity (coordinator, creative professional, headteachers or members of the SMT) and to partnership 'type'. The various participants often gave numerous examples of what lessons they had learned in the transition between planning and implementation:

Interviewer: *What lessons do you think have been learned through the attempts to implement the initiative?*

Interviewee: *I think the things that worked best have been where there has been a clear aim for the activity and an involvement of the people, that's important – that staff and the children have been really thoroughly involved. I think that one or two of the things have been peripheral things and it's been nice to do it, but whether there's been any lasting effect, I doubt.*

But the ones that have really worked have been where the member of staff who has been leading it has been really committed to it and where it's really fired the children up and it's led to the development of other things – rather than a stand-alone thing (headteacher).

These responses were located under nine general categories: (i) ensuring continuity across activities; (ii) good planning; (iii) maintaining clear aims and focuses; (iv) extending activities across the curriculum; (v) drawing on 'quality' creative professionals; (vi) starting from small-scale activities and building outwards; (vii) focusing on teaching and learning; (viii) involving the community; and (ix) developing confidence. Table 8.1 shows the frequencies of these responses from coordinators, creative professionals, headteachers and SMT members.

Table 8.1 Perceptions of the lessons learned during the transition from planning to implementation across professional roles

Lessons learned	Coordinators *N*	Creative professionals *N*	Headteachers or SMT *N*	Total *N*
(i) Continuity across activities	1	0	4	5
(ii) Good planning	6	4	1	11
(iii) Maintaining clear aims and focuses	5	0	2	7
(iv) Extending activities across the curriculum	2	1	3	6
(v) The quality of creative professionals	1	1	0	2
(vi) Building outwards from small scale activities	2	2	3	7
(vii) Focusing on teaching and learning	1	2	0	3
(viii) Involving the community	1	0	1	2
(ix) Developing confidence	0	6	0	6

Source: *NFER Stage 2 Evaluation*

It can be seen that for coordinators, good planning and maintaining clear aims and focuses outweighed all other lessons. This suggests that at the level of implementation, coordinators perceived these areas as a significant feature of transition.

An interesting feature in the table is the extent to which some of the issues identified as significant by coordinators were omitted by creative professionals, while others were presented in their place. Creative professionals identified the issue of developing confidence (ix) alongside those eight issues identified by coordinators. But issues such as continuity

(i), clarity of aims and focuses (iii) and community involvement (viii) were not given by creative professionals. This may suggest that coordinators may not have recognised learning about the need to build confidence among teachers and pupils, whereas creative professionals may have been less concerned with the longer-term aims and impacts of the initiative.

When we compared the data for headteachers and members of the school SMT, we found a different emphasis than both coordinators and creative professionals (see Table 8.1). The data suggested that headteacher and members of SMT prioritise continuity (iii), the extension of activities across the curriculum (iv), and building out from smaller scale activities. Headteachers may have played an important role in 'binding' the initiative, ensuring continuity and congruence with the broader aims of the school, the curriculum, or the partnership.

Professional identity was of greater importance in shaping responses than was partnership type. Only two of the partnerships displayed any degree of internal congruence (in terms of the lessons that have been learned). In the majority of partnerships, the perceptions of participants varied as much within a partnership as they did between partnerships. The different identities of the participants therefore appear significant.

8.3 Areas requiring further support or consideration at the partnership and initiative levels

Participants were invited to identify issues at the immediate partnership and the overall initiative level that, in their view, required attention. At the initiative level, a number of issues were identified as requiring consideration:

(i) providing greater support and guidance concerning the funding;

(ii) reducing the amount of paperwork;

(iii) the need to extend activities from an 'arts' base and to include arts subjects where there had been a focus on 'non-arts' subjects;

(iv) raising the status of the initiative;

(v) ensuring better communication between partnerships and CAPE UK;

(vi) building closer links;

(vii) improving planning; and

(viii) sharing good practice.

These issues were granted greater significance by some participants than others. For example, raising the status of the initiative was considered to be important by a small number of headteachers, but not by coordinators or creative professionals. This pattern of issue, identification and role was

discerned across all of the issues (see Table 8.2). However, it was also clear that some issues were identified as requiring greater consideration *across* professional identities.

Table 8.2 Issues identified as requiring greater consideration at the overall initiative level

Issues requiring attention	Coordinators *N*	Creative professionals *N*	Headteachers or SMT *N*	Total *N*
1. Providing greater support and guidance	6	2	2	10
2. Reducing amount of paperwork	5	1	6	12
3. Curricular location of activities	3	2	2	7
4. Raising the status of the initiative	0	0	2	2
5. Ensuring better communication between partnerships and CAPE	3	2	2	7
6. Facilitating closer links within and between partnerships	3	3	1	7
7. Improving planning	1	1	3	5
8. Sharing good practice	2	4	3	9

Source: *NFER Stage 2 Evaluation*

The major issues in terms of frequency were: an excess of paperwork; providing greater support and guidance (especially on funding matters); and the need to share practice. The major issues, in terms of identification across professional identities were: the need to share practice; better communication; and the curricular location of activities. This suggests that the latter issues affected participants across the initiative, whereas the former issues disproportionately influenced one or more groups within it.

When asked which features of the *partnership* required attention, many respondents were clearly reflective in their answers and collectively identified five areas:

(i) communication within the partnership itself;

(ii) the constitution of the partnership and relationships within and between partnerships;

(iii) the curricular location of the activities mounted;

(iv) the links between creative activities and teaching and learning; and

(v) the administration of the initiative at the partnership level.

Where implementation was perceived to have been less successful than it could have been, participants pointed to the confusion and difficulties in working across professional and institutional boundaries – one of these being the sheer pace of the initiative. The original ways in which the partnerships had moved from planning to implementation had, in the view of some participants, been lost in a flurry of activity. A major concern for all participants was the curricular location of activities, the links between those activities, teaching and learning, and communication within and between partnerships. Furthermore, when the features that were perceived to require attention were compared with role, there was some congruence (see Table 8.3).

Table 8.3 Features of the partnership identified as requiring attention

Features requiring attention	Coordinators *N*	Creative professionals *N*	Headteachers or SMT *N*	Total *N*
1. Communication within the partnership	4	5	3	12
2. Constitution of, and relationships between partnerships	6	3	0	9
3. Curricular location of activities	3	7	4	14
4. Links between activities and teaching and learning	6	4	3	13
5. Administration at partnership level	2	1	0	3

Source: *NFER Stage 2 Evaluation*

These data suggest that at the level of partnership, there was concern at what was being implemented where, and the general impact of this on teaching and learning. The prevalence of the desire to link CAPE activities with advances in teaching and learning and expand activities beyond the creative arts is suggestive of a degree of support for the principles of CAPE UK after the experience of implementation. At a partnership level, notwithstanding some concerns about administration and constitution, there were signs of the emergence of a consensus on how creativity may be promoted and embedded at the school level.

8.4 Identifying the core features of successful and less successful implementation

In order to identify the core features of successful and less successful implementation, participants were asked what factors had assisted or inhibited implementation. From their responses, it was possible to identify the core features of successful and less successful implementation, as perceived by the providers. Eleven main factors were identified as facilitating the implementation of creative activities:

(i) the support of the head;

(ii) the support of the school SMT (as a group distinct from, but related to, the headteacher as an individual);

(iii) the support (and enthusiasm) of staff;

(iv) the support (and efforts) of the coordinator;

(v) the support of the creative professional;

(vi) the support of the community;

(vii) the support of pupils;

(viii) the availability of funding;

(ix) the status of the initiative;

(x) the partnership model; and

(xi) the school ethos.

When these issues were ranked, it was apparent that there was a core of perceived 'enabling' factors working across the initiative (see Table 8.4).

Table 8.4 Factors identified as enabling the implementation of creative activities by role within the initiative

Enabling factors	Coordinators *N*	Creative professionals *N*	Headteachers or SMT *N*	Total *N*
1. Support of headteacher	4	3	0	7
2. Support of school SMT	12	2	1	15
3. Support of staff	10	11	5	26
4. Support of coordinator	1	3	9	13
5. Support of creative professional	1	0	3	4
6. Support of community	1	0	0	1
7. Support of pupils	0	1	0	1
8. Availability of funding	1	1	2	4
9. Status of initiative	0	2	0	2
10. Partnership model	1	2	2	5
11. School ethos	0	0	2	2

Source: *NFER Stage 2 Evaluation*

The most frequently mentioned factor that enabled implementation was the support of staff, followed by the support of the SMT and the coordinator. It should be considered here that frequency of response does not necessarily correlate with significance. It may be that an issue that was infrequently cited as an enabling factor was significant, yet not recognised as such by the majority of the participants. None the less, and bearing in mind such caveats, there was a recognition on the part of many participants that the initiative rested on the enthusiasm and commitment of those teachers taking part in it:

Interviewer: *What factors have assisted the implementation of CAPE activities here?*

Interviewee: *Certainly the attitude of the staff that have been involved within the school, and, you know, these are staff members who are not being paid, you know. CAPE paid me and they paid various other people, the designer and the director, but they didn't pay the music teacher or the producer and they put in long, long hours and they do so because they felt passionate about working with young people. So that's assisted. Without those vital people, it couldn't have happened* (creative professional).

These perceptions were common among all participants and, compared with the relatively low influence assigned to factors such as the support of the community, of pupils, or the influence of school ethos or funding, suggest that the initiative rested to some extent on the goodwill and commitment of teachers. However, allied to this goodwill was the role played by others, particularly the SMT. Participants reported that implementation was enabled by 'visibility' at SMT level:

Interviewer: *What factors have assisted the implementation of CAPE activities here?*

Interviewee: *At this school we've had total support from the senior management team, of which I'm a member, because I've had responsibility for coordinating it and therefore the communication about the project has been made a lot easier. I know I haven't fought to get it on to agendas and fought for it to be recognised. Here, that's not been a problem; it's been a strength* (coordinator).

When we examined the responses by partnership type, we found that there was congruence between the support of the headteacher (and/or the SMT) and extensive partnerships. That is, there were enabling factors at all sites, but the key enablers appeared within those partnerships typified as extensive. In other partnerships, one or more of these factors was absent (such as the support of the headteacher, or some resistance among teachers). However, when we analysed the enabling factors by role, we found quite clear role dimensions to perceptions (see Table 8.4). For example, whereas headteachers or members of SMT were more likely to perceive the coordinator as an influential factor, coordinators were more likely to

nominate SMT members as important enabling factors. However, patterns remained concerning the support of staff and the low influence granted to factors such as community and pupils.

When we examined factors that were perceived to inhibit implementation, it was possible to identify nine:

(i) a lack of support at the SMT level;

(ii) the bureaucracy or overload of paperwork associated with the initiative;

(iii) poor planning;

(iv) a sense of 'initiative overload' within one or more schools;

(v) school issues such as the timetable, examinations, relocations, etc.;

(vi) a degree of staff indifference;

(vii) the low status of the initiative;

(viii) poor communication; and

(ix) a lack of adequate funding.

When these issues were ranked, it was apparent that there was a core of perceived 'inhibiting' factors working across the initiative (see Table 8.5).

Table 8.5 Factors identified as inhibiting the implementation of creative activities by role within the initiative

Inhibiting factors	Coordinators *N*	Creative professionals *N*	Headteachers or SMT *N*	Total *N*
1. Lack of support at SMT level	1	2	1	4
2. Bureaucracy/paperwork overload	4	0	4	8
3. Poor planning	2	2	0	4
4. 'Initiative overload'	2	0	2	4
5. School issues	3	4	5	12
6. Degree of staff indifference	2	3	1	6
7. Low status of initiative	2	0	3	
8. Poor communication	0	3	0	3
9. Lack of adequate funding	0	0	2	2

Source: *NFER Stage 2 Evaluation*

It is clear from the data that school-level issues were frequently perceived to be a major inhibiting factor concerning the implementation of creative activities. However, there was no clear correspondence between school-level inhibiting factors and partnership type. For example, in one partnership a major fire was identified as a school-level inhibiting factor, but the impact of this was tempered by an abundance of the enabling factors set out earlier.

The degree of influence imposed by factors such as relocations, examinations, tests, and so on may be exacerbated by the absence of enabling factors. The relationship between enabling and inhibiting factors may be such that some partnerships may successfully implement creative activities *despite* the presence of inhibiting factors, whereas other partnerships may be less successful in implementation because they lack those enabling factors that may overcome any school-level (or other) inhibiting factors.

A number of inhibiting factors appeared to exert a disproportionate influence on implementation overall, such as school-level issues, whereas other factors were identified on the basis of an individual's role within the initiative. For example, creative professionals reported that problems of communication inhibited implementation, whereas coordinators, heads or members of the SMT did not:

Interviewer: *What factors have inhibited implementation?*

Interviewee: *I think because all of the people involved in these processes are, just by their very nature, are people that aren't in one place for very long. All of us, everyone involved, everyone I talk to, everyone who tries to talk to me, we are always moving and going somewhere else and thinking about something else. And it's kind of a case of lots of people with lots of different things on their minds trying to get all of that together* (creative professional).

Coordinators, headteachers or members of the SMT reported that problems of 'initiative overload' inhibited implementation, whereas creative professionals did not. It may be that such overload is general to schools and not CAPE specific, affecting the perceptions of school-based partners only. Such variations suggest that proximity to implementation and the role an individual plays during implementation influenced the perceptions of those factors that may have got in the way. Compared with the data for enabling factors, we can suggest that the support of the SMT and staff enabled such school-based inhibiting factors to be overcome in some contexts. The degree to which this may be achieved may also be contingent on partnership-specific factors, such as constitution, its *modus operandi*, priorities and the curricular location of those activities implemented, as these relate to partnership type. While partnership type did not necessarily correspond to the absence of inhibiting factors, extensive partnerships have sufficient 'stock' of enabling factors to overcome some or all of them.

9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

9.1 The Stage 2 evaluation

In 1997, the NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) was commissioned by CAPE UK (Creative Arts Partnerships in Education UK) to conduct a baseline evaluation (Ashworth *et al.*, 1998) prior to launching its initiative in Leeds and Greater Manchester. In 2000, NFER was invited to carry out a retrospective evaluation of the project's progress. The overall focus of this Stage 2 evaluation was on the processes of implementation and not on the impact of the initiative on participating pupils. Specifically, the evaluation was contracted to consider the nature of partnerships, planning, implementation plans, programmes for the European Social Fund (ESF) target group, evaluation, continuity in the aims, and enabling and inhibiting factors. Following a brief overview of the research methods, this chapter summarises the key findings for each of these themes.

The evaluation consisted of two distinct but related strands. Strand 1 consisted of half-day visits to all 23 school-based partnerships and included interviews with key personnel (usually, a school CAPE coordinator, a member of the SMT and a creative professional), the collection of relevant documents and the use of a pro forma to collect background data. From these partnerships, six were selected by random purposive sampling to form case studies for Strand 2. This second strand was designed to extend the scope of the methods used in Strand 1, by interviewing pupils, for example, and by observations of creative activities. In addition to the six school-based case studies, both sites of provision outside compulsory education were invited to form case studies. Also included in the research were interviews with personnel based at CAPE UK and LEA personnel associated with the initiative. All the fieldwork was completed between February and July 2000.

9.2 Partnerships

The evaluation investigated the range of approaches adopted in the formation of school-based partnerships. The research found that the CAPE UK vision of partnership was related to, but differed from, the model presented by CAPE Chicago, an initiative that provided some early inspiration for the UK project, but that remains 'arts based'. Whereas the Chicago initiative expressed a model of partnership that was semi-formal in nature, had a high degree of community involvement, was sustained in intent and sought

to shape the curriculum in schools, CAPE UK adopted a more experimental approach, allowing schools to interpret partnership in different ways. Accordingly, CAPE UK partnerships (in seeking to explore broader issues of creativity) avoided structured approaches along the Chicago line and tended instead to informality and variability. In many cases, the participants were concerned with the practicalities of implementing creative activities rather than with developing any lasting partnership. However, in other cases, partnerships were able to transcend the immediacy of individual activities and establish longer-term and more embedded partnership models.

Three different types of partnerships were identified: the extensive; the developing; and the constrained.

The *extensive* partnerships built on previous relationships, were relatively stable, displayed high degrees of commitment from their members and lent themselves to more widespread engagement in creative activities across the curriculum. Their constitution and modus operandi served to enhance possibilities and build on existing potential.

The *developing* partnerships were located within particular clusters of subjects, or were closely identified with a specific core of individuals. They tended to expand and contract around this core, offering greater or lesser potential depending on a range of contextual factors. These may include the involvement of particular organisations or individuals.

The *constrained* partnerships offered fewer possibilities for engagement in creative activities and for their implementation beyond an individual subject. Activities were limited to a series of discrete 'one-off' projects and were restricted to a small group of participants. There were few CAPE partnerships of this type and where they did exist, they reflected difficulties in coming to terms with the demands of the initiative.

Across the initiative, partnerships adopted different priorities and worked with different visions of creativity. For example, within one partnership a *democratic* model of creativity existed that identified creativity as a potentiality in all children and pursued creative activities across the curriculum. In another, a more *segmented* model prevailed, with creativity being identified with particular subjects and individuals. Across the initiative, any tensions of definition were assisted by experimentation. However, there was evidence of some resistance to partnership when it is conceived as committee based or committee led.

The experience of CAPE UK partnerships raises important questions for recent national developments that seek to develop a partnership approach to the implementation of creative activities[1] (e.g. the *Creative Partnerships* initiative launched by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)):

[1] *The Stage 1 evaluation of CAPE UK partnerships (see Ashworth et al., 1998) also raised important issues concerning the definitions of creativity, informing the debate on the nature of creativity, as well as the nature of partnership.*

- What is meant by, and understood by, the term 'partnership' at a strategic and operational level?
- Are different models of partnership more or less likely to take hold in schools?
- What is the relationship between an approach to partnership and the successful or less successful implementation of creative activities?

In response to the latter, the tentative conclusions from this evaluation would be that the *extensive* model of partnership would be more likely to generate an approach to creativity that transcends any arts or narrow curricular location and engages the greater number of participants.

9.3 Planning

The second aim of the evaluation focused on the nature of planning and partnership plans within the initiative. Planning and plans in this context include both formal and informal processes, such as the documents submitted to CAPE UK as plans (their production and revisions to them) and the procedural aspects of planning, such as where and when it took place, who was involved in it and participants' subjective experience of planning.

The research found that the time set aside for partnership planning was considered by teachers and creative professionals to be an essential and very positive feature of the initiative. The majority of participants found that the resources that had been made available for planning enhanced it, differentiating CAPE from most other initiatives.

Participation in planning varied according to partnership type and participant identity. Planning was more effective within those partnerships identified as extensive, less so in those identified as constrained. Teachers were more likely to be involved in planning at the level of activity, coordinators at regional level. Planning required considerable energy and it is perhaps significant that few partnerships reported failure. Instead, participants valued the process and found it invigorating, despite the complexity and ambiguity within it.

The evaluation identified four main approaches to planning at school-based partnership level: the coordinator-led and inclusive; the coordinator-led and exclusive; the creative professional-led and inclusive; and the non-directed and exclusive.

The *coordinator-led and inclusive* approach was the most common and the most effective in engaging the school SMT. In some cases, this was because senior management was responsible for coordinating the initiative, was directly involved, or held an active interest in it. Within the approach, there was evidence of a strong commitment to inclusivity in planning, where

the coordinator played a leading role, but included others. In partnerships that employed this approach (primarily extensive ones), the coordinator was often involved in planning at every level of the initiative.

The *coordinator-led and exclusive* approach to planning was less prevalent (evident in only four of the 21 partnerships) and tended to involve the school SMT less. It was an approach that was common where the initiative was identified with a particular individual or department, or where, in the absence of other partners, the coordinator felt compelled to take responsibility for planning.

The *creative professional-led and inclusive* approach only occurred in the extensive partnerships; it was not evident in those typified as developing or constrained. It was possibly a 'reactive' approach, in that it was evident only in two sites where there were replacement coordinators. In this approach, the creative professional took on a great deal of the planning and occasionally acted as 'mentor' to a new coordinator.

The *non-directed and exclusive* approach to planning was associated with constrained partnerships and therefore infrequent. No single partner took overall responsibility for planning. It was associated with partnerships where individuals had left, where there was a break in activity, or where there was no long-term planning strategy.

Generally, in most cases, decision-making was responsive, collaborative and focused on the overall aims of the initiative. In a small minority of cases (primarily constrained partnerships), decision-making was delegated to, or the responsibility of, one person. Within CAPE UK itself, decision-making was predominantly the responsibility of the management group, consisting of the Chief Executive (in collaboration with), the regional coordinators and CAPE development workers. The Regional Arts Boards (RABs) acted as 'critical friends' during this process, and there is evidence that some creative professionals and coordinators also exerted an influence on decisions made at the initiative level.

The research found that revisions to partnership plans were often made. The most common cause for such changes was that the original plan was too structured and lacked the flexibility required for implementation. Other reasons for revisions included: over-elaborate and over-ambitious plans; staff turnover or illness; the pressure of the timetable or school year; the influence of tests and examinations; the compatibility of individuals to activities; and the ineffective management of the planning process within the partnership or partner school(s).

9.4 Implementation

The third and fourth aims of the evaluation were to explore the effectiveness of the implementation of plans and to assess the degree to which creativity had been built into planning and the implementation of plans.

The research found that the development of creative teaching methods was evident in planning and in the implementation of plans, although not always evident in the plans themselves. It found that plans for creative activities were an outcome of, but not the most important feature of, effective planning. In many respects, the participants resisted formalising their planning into plans in order to facilitate creativity during their implementation.

The evaluation identified four conditions that were deemed to be conducive to the development of creative teaching methods:

- the presence of a high level of trust between pupils, teachers and creative professionals;
- the presence of professional mobility (the sharing, or changing of roles between the teachers and the creative professionals);
- attaching a high value to learning outcomes; and
- engaging pupils as active participants in the learning process.

Developing creativity in the learner was a central feature of much planning. Several strategies that sought to enhance creative learning were identified:

- changing the site of learning;
- changing the learning activity to match the perceived interests of pupils;
- changing the learning process by encouraging collaborative learning;
- suspending the formal curriculum or changing the outcome or assessment methods; and
- suspending sanctions by permitting challenges to existing school norms.

The evaluation described five conditions that were regularly associated with the successful implementation of plans:

- effective communication;
- the effective targeting of creative activities (matching the skills available to pupils' abilities, resources, time constraints, etc.);
- strong leadership and the active involvement of the school SMT; and
- the extension of activities beyond a narrow curriculum base or a location identified with the arts.

Where there was less symmetry between plans and their implementation, it was often linked to a lack of flexibility, over-ambitious plans and to staffing or school-based factors.

Following the implementation of plans, there was evidence of changes to teaching practice, to pupil–teacher relationships, to levels of community involvement, to practices across school departments and to relationships between schools. Some partnerships reported changes in all of these areas, others only in some, but the issues identified above were generalisable across sites. When we examined change by partnership type, we found that in general, constrained partnerships reported less change; developing and extensive partnerships, more. Successful implementation was, therefore, more likely to be linked to extensive partnerships.

9.5 The European Social Fund target group

The fifth aim of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which CAPE principles had influenced programmes of learning with the ESF target group: those disadvantaged within the current system.

The research found that CAPE activities had a significant positive impact on the learning experience of some disadvantaged young people. The evidence suggests that CAPE activities were perceived to have impacted on pupils' experience in four key areas:

- increasing pupils' engagement and overcoming disaffection;
- increasing retention in educational settings and reducing drop-out;
- rejoining pupils with their educational careers following fractures due to illness or absenteeism; and
- offering new opportunities to pupils and so influencing their aspirations.

The research found that existing patterns of learning were changed with regard to the ESF target group and that CAPE activities were reported as instrumental in changing attitudes towards marginalised young people. This change was described more commonly, and was perceived to be more substantial, in extensive partnerships, or those where ESF activities had been sustained. Constrained partnerships, or those where ESF activities had not been as sustained, reported less impact.

The evidence suggested that those activities implemented under ESF retained CAPE principles, although these principles came under pressure in four areas: age (the criteria that required a focus on pupils aged over 14); the curricular location of activities (the subjects activities were implemented in); the need to accredit activities funded from the ESF; and the increased bureaucracy associated with ESF-funded programmes.

When out-of-school activities funded under ESF were examined, it was found that these were deemed to be successful in engaging and motivating an appreciable proportion of the disaffected young people they targeted. A particular feature of this dimension of CAPE activity was the ways in which teachers and creative professionals developed opportunities for marginalised pupils to experience success through creative activities.

9.6 Reflection and evaluation

The sixth aim of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which schools and other providers were reflecting on and evaluating the CAPE initiative and its impact.

The research found that the majority of partnerships had initiated some method of internal review or evaluation, and that both formal and informal methods were in use across the initiative, often within the same partnership. In many partnerships, evaluation relied on unstructured methods, and some partnerships were developing 'creative' forms of evaluation. In extended partnerships, or where the SMT was more actively involved, there was evidence of more rigorous systems of evaluation. The inclusion of, or reference to, the CAPE initiative in the School Development Plan assisted both evaluation and review, although the responsibility for evaluation rested largely on the school-based coordinator. Finally, the research found that support for reflection and evaluation was available to participants from CAPE UK, LEAs and through links to the broader research community.

The evaluation found that participants were keen to measure the impact of the initiative in five key areas: pupils' engagement; their attainment; their retention; their return to educational settings; and the impact of the initiative on their educational careers. In terms of mapping or measuring the impact of the initiative on the development of creative teaching methods and the development of creativity in the learner, the research found little evidence as yet that outside these key areas listed above, partnerships were giving this high priority.

There was evidence of strategies of reflection being practised within partnerships, but time constraints limited participants' opportunities to reflect and the ability of such reflections to inform future planning. There was a good deal of reflection around activities and this was often brought together for the benefit of the partnerships overall. Participants reported that they would welcome greater collaboration and reflection beyond the activity itself.

The role of informal networks in strategies to share practice was found to be important, and at a regional level, there was evidence of strong cross-partnership links and successful strategies of cooperation outside the more formal structure of initiative management. However, the strategies to share good practice were differentially formed across the initiative as a whole.

Effective strategies were evident, and many of these were located in the extensive partnerships. The ways in which these successes may be shared may be an important consideration, particularly for constrained partnerships, where the absence of SMT support may limit the ability of participants to share their work with others.

9.7 Partnership aims

The seventh aim of the evaluation sought to examine the current aims within the initiative and to map any change between these and the original aims.

The research found that the current aims of CAPE UK were perceived differently by those participating in the research and that this difference was based on four factors:

- an individual's role within the initiative;
- an individual's proximity to the implementation of creative activities;
- the duration of an individual's involvement in the initiative; and
- partnership type.

The degree to which the aims of CAPE were seen as stable was found to be linked to successful implementation and the factors identified above. That is, where there was perception of stability, it was associated with successful implementation, with extensive partnerships, the duration of an individual's engagement, their proximity or distance from activities and their overall role.

There was evidence of a shift in partnership priorities from the provision of creative experiences and the production of creative products, to creative teaching and learning methods. The production of creative products, in itself, became a vehicle for learning.

The evaluation also found that implementation affects the aims and priorities of a partnership, rendering some of them rhetorical and making others difficult to achieve. Where there was congruence between a partnership's aims and priorities and the activities mounted, key individuals, such as school-based coordinators and members of the school SMT, were associated with retaining the focus. None the less, through implementation, the majority of partnerships reported that their original aims had remained unchanged and that these aims had been met.

The impact of the initiative on the institutions involved varied in relation to partnership type, with participants located in extensive partnerships reporting the greatest and potentially most sustained impact. However, even where implementation had been less successful (in constrained partnerships, for example), the impact was reported as significant, suggesting that all partnerships were challenged by implementation.

9.8 Enabling and inhibiting factors

The eighth and final aim of the evaluation was to report on the lessons that had been learned during the transition from planning to implementing creative activities. It sought to identify areas that require further consideration or support and to identify the core features of successful and less successful implementation.

Partnership type was found to be less important in shaping participants' perceptions of the key lessons learned through implementation than their role within the partnership (as a teacher, school-based coordinator, creative professional, head or member of the school SMT, etc.). Across all participants, the need to ensure good planning and maintain clear aims were the primary issues. Beyond these was a wide range of others, suggesting that a degree of intra-professional learning took place within the initiative. For example, creative professionals learned that some participants required confidence before engaging in creative activities, whereas headteachers learned how to 'bind' activities and ensure continuity. Thus, the lessons learned tended to be identity specific and general across sites, with professionals learning to work together in the implementation of creative activities.

Within the individual partnerships, five areas were identified as important aspects in successful implementation: good communication within the partnership; the constitution of the partnership and its relationship to others within the CAPE UK initiative; the curricular location of the activities mounted; the links between activities and teaching and learning; and the administration of the initiative at the partnership level.

Beyond the individual partnership, and across the initiative overall, the research found a number of areas that may require consideration: the need for greater support and guidance concerning funding for creative educational activities; the need to reduce the amount of paperwork associated with the initiative; the need to extend the initiative outwards from its 'arts base' within some partnerships; the need to raise the status of the initiative (locally and nationally); the need to ensure better communication between the different partnerships and between the partnerships and CAPE UK; the need to make more effective links between partnerships and with other initiatives; the need to improve planning; and the need to share the evident good practice.

Overall, nine factors were identified that inhibited implementation. However, of these, only three could be associated with less successful implementation and these were largely linked to the constrained partnership type: school-specific factors, such as a timetable inflexibility, examinations, relocation; a lack of support for the initiative at the level of school SMT; and an inability to deal with the paperwork associated with the initiative (overload).

The research was able to identify the key factors that enabled implementation. Of these 11 key factors, three are implicated with successful implementation:

- the support and enthusiasm of staff;
- the support of the school SMT; and
- the support and efforts of the school-based coordinator.

The research also found that a range of enabling and inhibiting factors could be evident within a single partnership and that any inhibiting factors could be and were overcome. However, this required the presence of the three core enabling factors above: the core features of successful implementation.

9.9 Conclusion

This evaluation builds on previous research collaboration between CAPE UK and the NFER. Its findings are of specific relevance to CAPE UK and to those engaged in its partnership activities, but do, in our view, have implications beyond them. These are particularly relevant in the context of the increased emphasis on, and the promotion of, creative partnerships, by bodies such as the DCMS. The findings may also be of interest to arts organisations and to teachers in schools where creative activities are offered to pupils, especially in partnerships with artists, community groups, business representatives and others.

CAPE UK has been involved in developing creative partnerships across the north of England, primarily in the cities of Leeds and Manchester, for some time. As part of its activities, it examined (through research) the workings of partnerships, asking questions such as:

- What do we mean by partnership?
- How does a partnership come together and operate?
- What are the challenges that different partners face and how are they resolved?
- Should a partnership be constituted around *ad hoc* creative activities, or should it aspire to be something more lasting?

The NFER research shows that there are a number of difficulties in establishing and sustaining creative partnerships in education, with difficulties in:

- extending activities across curriculum subjects;
- sustaining membership and commitment;
- escaping an 'arts' identity; and
- effecting changes in the professional practice of different partners.

However, it also shows that, where partnerships are successful (such as those CAPE UK partnerships identified as extensive), there exists:

- the potential for partners to come together with a shared vision and work collectively to change the aspirations of young people;
- an opportunity for teachers, creative professionals, pupils, parents, school governors, headteachers and members of the business and wider community to move beyond usual expectations of them;
- the possibility of changing teachers' perceptions of pupils and changing pupils' perceptions of teachers; and
- an expectation that creativity exists in, adds to, and extends from, education: that schools are, or can become, creative environments and creative communities.

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PARTNERSHIPS FOR CREATIVITY: An evaluation of implementation

This report examines the implementation of 23 creative partnerships established by CAPE UK in the north and north west of England. It is based on interviews with 111 teachers, creative professionals and pupils, observations of creative activities and documentary analysis. The research took place at all 23 partnerships and six of these provide case studies, where implementation was examined in greater detail.

The research addresses such questions as:

- What do we mean by 'partnership'?
- How do partnerships come together and operate?
- What challenges do the different partners face and how are they resolved?
- Should creative partnerships be formed around *ad hoc* activities, or should they be something more lasting?

The research found that there were challenges in both establishing and sustaining partnerships, including difficulties in:

- extending activities across curriculum subjects;
- sustaining membership and commitment; and
- effecting changes in the professional practice of different partners.

However, it also shows that, where partnerships are successfully implemented, there exists:

- the potential for partners to change the aspirations of young people;
- an opportunity for teachers, creative professionals and pupils to move beyond usual expectations of learners and learning;
- the possibility of changing teachers' perceptions of pupils and changing pupils' perceptions of teachers; and
- an expectation that schools are, or can become, creative environments and creative communities.

The report should be of interest to those involved in developing creative partnerships, to arts organisations and to teachers in schools where creative activities are offered to pupils, especially in partnership with artists, community groups, businesses, parents or others.

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